

BOYHOOD: A Story.



LEO TOLSTOY.



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BOYHOOD: A STORY

BOYHOODSTORY



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BOYHOOD: A STORY

BY

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BY

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BOYHOOD.

CHAPTER I.

OUR TUTOR, KARL IVANOVITCH.*

IT was on August 12,† 18—, three days after my tenth birthday, on which occasion I had received many fine presents, that Karl Ivanovitch awoke me at seven o'clock in the morning by striking a fly just above my head with a flap made of coarse brown paper stuck on a stick. He did it so clumsily, that he nearly knocked down the little image which hung over my bed, and that the fly fell straight on my head. I peeped out from under my blanket, readjusted the image, which was still shaking, and threw the fly on the floor, casting an angry, though rather sleepy, glance at Karl Ivanovitch. The latter, however, went on walking up and down the room in his gaudy morning-gown, with a girdle of the same stuff, a red knitted skull-cap on his head, and soft goat-skin boots; he kept close to the wall, every now and then making a sudden dash at the flies.

* Patronymic.

† Russian style is behind English twelve days, so that August 12 is August 24 in England.

‘Well,’ thought I, ‘I am but a child, it is true, but still he ought not to disturb me. Why does he not kill the flies near Voldemar’s bed? See how many there are! No, Voldemar is older than I; I am the youngest, that is why he plagues me. He is always trying to tease me,’ whispered I to myself. ‘He saw very well that he awoke and frightened me, but he pretends he did not notice it . . . disgusting man! And that morning-gown, and skull-cap, and tassel—how I do hate them!’

While I was thus mentally venting my anger against Karl Ivanovitch, the latter approached his bed, looked at the watch which hung on the wall in a little shoe, embroidered with glass-beads, suspended the fly-flap he had used on a nail, and evidently being in a most amiable mood, turned towards us.

‘Auf, Kinder, auf! . . . s’ist Zeit. Die Mutter ist schon im Saal!’* cried he in his hearty German voice; then, coming up to my bed, sat down at the foot of it and took his snuff-box out of his pocket. I pretended to be asleep. Karl Ivanovitch took a pinch of snuff, wiped his nose, snapped his fingers, and then, turning to me with a smile on his lips, he began to tickle my heels. ‘Nu, nun, Faulenzer,†’ said he.

Though I could not bear to be tickled, I did not jump up or answer him, but only hid my head further under the pillows, kicking with all my might and trying as hard as I could to refrain from laughter.

How kind he is, and how fond he is of us all! How could I feel so cross with him!

* ‘Up, children, up! . . . it is time. Mother is already in the drawing-room.’

† ‘Well, idler, well.’

I felt vexed with myself, and with Karl Ivanovitch, and was ready to laugh and cry at the same time; I was altogether in a state of nervous excitement.

‘Ach, lassen Sie,* Karl Ivanovitch!’ cried I, with tears in my eyes, looking out from under the pillows.

Karl Ivanovitch was surprised, left off tickling my heels, and began to ask me nervously why I was crying. Had I had a bad dream? . . . His kind German face, the interest with which he endeavoured to guess the cause of my tears, made them flow faster than before. I was ashamed of myself, and could not understand how a moment ago I had felt as if I hated Karl Ivanovitch, and could hardly bear the sight of his morning-gown, his skull-cap and tassel; now, on the contrary, I felt quite friendly towards them, and the tassel even seemed to me to be an evident proof of his kindness. I answered that I was crying because I had had a bad dream—that I had dreamt that mamma was dead and they were going to bury her. It was all pure invention, for I had quite forgotten what I had really seen in my dream, but when Karl Ivanovitch, touched by the story, tried to comfort me, I began to feel as if I had really had that dreadful dream, and my tears flowed afresh.

When Karl Ivanovitch left me, I rose and began to draw my stockings on to my little legs; my tears had ceased flowing, but the sad thoughts excited by my imaginary dream did not leave me. Our ‘diadka,†

* ‘Oh, please don’t touch me!’

† A sort of upper servant, chosen from among the serfs born on the nobleman’s estate, to whom the care of very young boys used to be entrusted formerly in Russia.

Nicolas, came in. He was a little dapper man with a grave look and respectful demeanour; Karl Ivanovitch and he were great friends. He brought in our clothes and boots; boots for Voldemar, but I had still to wear nasty shoes with little bows on them. I should have been ashamed to cry before him, even if the morning sun had not peeped so merrily through the windows, and if Voldemar, mimicking Maria Ivanovna, our sisters' governess, had not laughed so merrily and joyously, standing before the washing-stand, that even grave Nicolas, who stood near him with a towel over his shoulder, a piece of soap in one hand and a jug of water in the other, said with a smile :

' Pray leave off laughing, Voldemar Petrovitch, and wash yourself.'

I grew quite lively.

' Sind Sie bald fertig? '* cried Karl Ivanovitch from the schoolroom.

He spoke sternly, and his voice no longer had that expression of kindness which had touched me to tears a few minutes before. Karl Ivanovitch was quite another man in the schoolroom; there he was teacher. I washed and dressed hastily and responded to his call, brush in hand, smoothing down my wet hair.

Karl Ivanovitch, with his spectacles on his nose, and a book in his hands, sat in his usual place between the door and the window. To the left from the door there were two shelves; one of them belonged to us children, the second was Karl Ivanovitch's *own shelf*. On ours there were books of all kinds, school-books and others, some standing upright, others lying about.

* ' Will you soon be ready?'

Only two large volumes of 'Histoire des Voyages,' bound in red, were properly placed against the wall ; then came a medley of long, thick, large and small books, bindings without books, and books without any binding ; we used to squeeze everything in there, topsy-turvy, when we were ordered, after lesson-hours, to put our library, as Karl Ivanovitch pompously called the shelf, to rights. The books on *his own shelf*, though not so numerous as ours, were much more varied. I remember three of them : an unbound German treatise on the best way of manuring kitchen-gardens for cabbage, one volume of the 'History of the Seven Years' War,' bound in parchment, burnt through in one corner, and a whole course of hydrostatics. Karl Ivanovitch spent the greater part of his time in reading, by which he had even spoiled his sight, yet he never read anything except the above-mentioned works and the *Northern Bee*.*

Amongst the things which lay on Karl Ivanovitch's shelf was one which is inseparably bound with the recollection of him in my mind. It was a paste-board shade on a wooden stand which could be moved (raised or lowered) by means of small pegs. There was a picture on the shade, representing a caricature of a lady and a hairdresser. Karl Ivanovitch was very skilful in the making of various similar articles, and he had invented and made this shade himself in order to preserve his weak eyes from the bright light.

I see before me, as it were, his long figure wrapped up in a cotton morning-gown, and with a red cap on

* A well-known Russian periodical.

his head, from under which his scanty gray hair could be seen. I see him still sitting near the little table, on which stands the shade with the figure of the hair-dresser upon it; it casts its shadow on his face; he holds his book in one hand, the other rests on the arm of a chair; near him lies his watch, with a jockey painted on the hour-plate, a checkered pocket-handkerchief, his round black snuff-box, his green case for his spectacles, and the snuffers on a little tray. Each object stands so accurately in its proper place, that the inevitable conclusion everybody must come to on seeing it is, that Karl Ivanovitch's conscience is calm and his mind at rest.

Sometimes, after running about in the hall downstairs till I was tired, I used to steal up to the school-room; there sat Karl Ivanovitch alone in his arm-chair, reading one of his favourite books with a stately calm expression on his face. It sometimes happened that I did not find him reading: then his spectacles were down on his large aquiline nose; his blue half-closed eyes had a peculiar expression, and a melancholy smile played on his lips. All was quite still in the room, nothing was heard but his calm breathing and the striking of the clock.

I used often to stand at the door without his seeing me, and would say to myself: 'Poor old man! We are many; we can play and enjoy ourselves; but he is all alone, and there is nobody to be kind to him. He says he is an orphan. The story of his life is a sad one. I remember what he told Nicolas about it. It is dreadful to be in such a position!'

And then I would feel so sorry for him that, going

up to him and taking his hand, I would say: 'Lieber (dear) Karl Ivanovitch!'

He liked me to speak thus to him; he always treated me more kindly after it, and it was evident that he felt touched.

The other wall was covered with maps, which had all been torn to pieces and glued together again by the master hand of Karl Ivanovitch. On one side of the third wall, in the middle of which was a door which led downstairs, hung two rulers—one all hacked and cut, that was ours, the other a new one, that was *his own*, and he used it rather for the purpose of 'ruling' us than our copybooks. On the other side of the wall was a blackboard, on which our misdemeanours were noted down, the graver ones with noughts, and the lighter ones with small crosses. To the left of the blackboard was the corner in which we used to kneel down when we were punished.

How well I remember that corner! How well I remember the grate before the stove, with a hole in it to let the warm air into the room, and the noise it usually made when it was turned! I used to stand in that corner till my knees and back ached, thinking that Karl Ivanovitch had forgotten all about me.

'He is very comfortable, sitting in the soft chair and reading his hydrostatics,' I would say to myself; 'but how do I feel?'

And in order to attract his attention I would begin to open and close the hole, or to pick the stucco out of the wall; but when a larger piece than usual fell noisily on to the floor, I must confess that terror predominated over every other feeling. I would then

glance at Karl Ivanovitch, but he sat with his book in his hand, seemingly unmindful of all else.

There was a table in the middle of the room ; it was covered with a shabby oilskin cloth, from under which the edges of the table all cut with penknives could be seen. Round the table there were several plain deal stools, brightly polished through long and frequent use. The last wall was taken up by three windows; they looked out upon the road, every stone, every rut or wheel-track of which was familiar and dear to me. On the other side of the road was the lopped lime-avenue, from behind which a rush paling peeped here and there; beyond the avenue lay a meadow, a barn on one side and a forest on the other; opposite, at some distance, stood the small hut of the watchman. Out of the window to the right, part of the terrace was seen; our elders usually sat there before dinner. Sometimes while Karl Ivanovitch was busy in correcting my dictation, I used to steal a look at the terrace, where my kind mother's dark hair or somebody's back attracted my attention, and whence the hum of voices and laughter were indistinctly heard. At such moments I usually felt very cross because I could not be there too, and was but a little boy, and would long for the time when I should be a grown-up man, and should not have to learn and study dialogues, but should sit there with those whom I loved. My vexation would then change to grief, and I would give way to my melancholy thoughts, and not even notice that Karl Ivanovitch was angry with me for the mistakes I had made.

At last Karl Ivanovitch took off his morning-gown, put on his blue dress-coat, set his cravat right before the looking-glass, and took us downstairs to bid our mother good-morning.

CHAPTER II.

MAMMA.

MY mother was in the drawing-room making tea ; she held the teapot in one hand, and in the other the tap of the samovar,* out of which the water flowed over the brim of the teapot on to the teaboard. She was looking attentively before her, and did not observe either this or our entrance.

So many remembrances arise, when one endeavours to recall the features of the beloved, that they grow dim before us like objects seen through tears. These are the tears of fancy. When I try to recall to mind my mother as she was then, only her brown eyes arise before me, always with the same look of love and kindness in them ; the little mole on her neck, a little lower than the little curls at the back of her head, her embroidered white collar, her dry soft hand, which caressed me so often, and which I loved to kiss, but the general expression of her face escapes me.

On the left-hand side of the sofa stood the old English piano ; my rather dark-complexioned sister Lùba was sitting near it, with evident difficulty play-

* Tea-urn.

ing Clementi's exercises with her little pink fingers, but just washed in cold water. She was eleven years old ; she wore a short gingham dress, with white small clothes trimmed with lace. As yet she could only take an octavo in 'arpeggio.' Near her sat Maria Ivanovna in a cap with pink ribbons, a blue caza-veika,* and with a red, ill-tempered face, which grew still more so as soon as Karl Ivanovitch came in. She threw him a look as black as thunder, and without returning his bow, continued to tap the ground with her foot, counting 'Un, deux, trois—un, deux, trois,' in a louder and more commanding tone than before.

Karl Ivanovitch went straight up to my mother, without paying any attention to Maria Ivanovna, and with a word of greeting in German, kissed her hand. She started, shook her head as if wishing to drive her sad thoughts away, gave her hand to Karl Ivanovitch, and kissed his wrinkled temple at the moment he kissed her hand.

'Ich danke, lieber (thank you, dear) Karl Ivanovitch,' said she ; and continued in German : ' Did the children sleep well ?'

Karl Ivanovitch was deaf of one ear, and now, thanks to the music, he heard nothing at all. He bowed his head nearer to the sofa, rested with his arm against the table, and standing on one foot, and smiling (his smile seemed to me the pinnacle of refinement), raised his cap, and said :

' Will you excuse me, Natalia Nicolaevna ?'

Karl Ivanovitch never took his red cap off for fear

* A warm jacket.

of catching cold, and every time he came into the drawing-room asked leave to keep it on.

‘Keep it on, Karl Ivanovitch. . . . I asked you if the children slept well,’ said mamma very loud, and drawing nearer to him.

But again he heard nothing, covered his bald head with his red cap, and smiled blandly.

‘Pray stop for one moment, Maria,’ said mamma to Maria Ivanovna with a smile. ‘It is impossible to hear a word that is said.’

When my mother smiled, her face grew still prettier, and all looked bright around her. If during the most trying moments of my life I could have caught a glimpse of her smile, I should not have known what grief is. It seems to me that all that is called beauty lies but in the smile; if the smile increase the charm of a face, the face is pretty; if the smile do not change it, the face is a plain one; if the smile spoil it, the face is ugly.

After kissing me, mamma raised my head with both hands, and looking fixedly at me, said :

‘Thou* hast been crying to-day?’

I gave no answer. She kissed my eyes, and asked in German :

‘What was the matter?’

When she talked amicably with us, she always used that language, which she knew perfectly well.

‘I cried in my dream, mamma,’ said I, remembering the dream I had invented with all its details, and involuntarily shuddering at the thought.

* In Russia the pronoun *thou* is very generally used; amongst relatives and friends always.

Karl Ivanovitch corroborated my words, but kept silence as to the dream itself. Having talked a little about the weather, a conversation in which Mimi took part likewise, mamma laid six pieces of sugar on the teaboard for some of the upper servants, and got up and approached the embroidery-frame which stood close to the window.

‘Well, children, now go to your father and ask him to come in to me without fail before he goes to the barn.’

The music, the counting, and the formidable looks began again, and we went to our father. Crossing the room which had gone by the name of the *butler's room* from the time of our grandfather, we entered our father's study.

CHAPTER III.

PAPA.

HE stood near his writing-table, and pointing to some envelopes, documents, and heaps of money, was talking excitedly, and explaining something to his steward, Jacob Mihailovitch, who stood in his usual place between the door and the barometer, with his arms behind his back, nervously turning and twisting his fingers.

The warmer my father grew, the quicker did the fingers move, and on the contrary, when my father grew calm the fingers grew still; but when Jacob began to speak himself, his fingers betrayed the greatest agitation, and moved backwards and forwards

desperately. It seemed to me that it would be possible to guess the secret thoughts of Jacob by the motion of his fingers; as to his face, it was always calm, and expressed both submission and conscious dignity—*i.e.*, I am right, but you may do as you like!

When my father saw us, he only said :

‘Wait a minute,’ and motioned to us to shut the door. ‘What in the world is the matter with thee to-day, Jacob?’* continued he, addressing the steward and shrugging his shoulders (it was a habit of his). ‘This envelope, including 800 roubles,† is’

Jacob pulled the counters‡ nearer to him, marked 800 on them, and cast down his eyes, waiting to hear what would come next.

‘. . . for the expenses for rural economy during my absence. Dost thou understand? Thou must receive 1,000 roubles rent for the mill . . . am I right, or not? Thou must receive from the exchequer 8,000 roubles as deposited securities; for the hay, of which, according to thine own calculation, we can sell 7,000 poods§—say 45 copecks per pood—thou wilt receive 3,000; consequently, how much money wilt thou have . . . 12,000? Am I right, or not?’

‘Quite right, sir,’ answered Jacob.

* In speaking to stewards and to servants, their masters not only used, but even now use simply their Christian names, and say *thou* instead of *you*.

† About eighty pounds sterling.

‡ The abacus is used everywhere in Russia for counting money.

§ One pood, having forty Russian pounds, is about thirty-six English pounds.

But I saw, by the motion of his fingers, that he was about to contradict my father, when the latter interrupted him.

‘Well, out of this money thou wilt send 10,000 to the council, for Petrovskoje.* As to the money which is now in the office,’ continued my father (Jacob turned off the former 12,000 and marked on the counters 21,000), ‘thou wilt bring it to me, and set it down as laid out, dating from to-day.’ (Jacob mixed the abacus, and turned it over, perhaps showing by this gesture that the 21,000 would be lost in the same manner.) ‘This envelope thou wilt hand, with money, according to the address.’

I was very near the table, and glanced at the inscription. There stood the address: ‘To Karl Ivanovitch Mauer.’

My father must have observed me reading what I had no business to read, for he laid his arm on my shoulder, and slightly turned me aside from the table. I did not understand whether it was a caress or a reproof, but at all events I kissed his large, muscular hand, which rested on my shoulder.

‘All shall be done, sir,’ said Jacob. ‘And what orders will you give me in reference to the money from the Habarovka Estate?’

Habarovka was a property belonging to my mother.

‘It is to be left in the office, and by no means to be used without my leave.’

Jacob was silent for some moments; then his fingers suddenly began to move with increased

* The name of the estate.

rapidity, and changing the look of obedient dulness which his face had worn while listening to his master's orders, for a sly, keen look, more natural to him, moved the abacus nearer to himself, and began thus :

'Allow me to tell you, Peter Alexandrovitch, that it will be impossible to pay at the council on the appointed day. You are pleased to say,' continued he deliberately, 'that we have to receive money from our securities, from the mill, and the hay?' (On mentioning these articles he marked them on the abacus.) 'But I fear we shall find ourselves mistaken in our calculations,' added he after a little silence, glancing thoughtfully at my father.

'Why?'

'Will you kindly listen? in respect to the mill, the miller was twice here to ask for an adjournment in paying, and swears that he has no money . . . he is here now ; will you not speak to him yourself?'

'What does he say?' asked my father, shaking his head to show that he had no wish to see the miller.

'The old story ! he has not had work enough ; the small sum of money he had was spent in making the dam. If we relieve him, *master*, I do not know what we shall gain by it ! As to the securities, I think I have already told you that our money is sunk there, and that we shall have to wait for it a long time. Lately I sent a cartload of flour with a letter about that business to Ivan Afonasievitch ; the answer was : "I shall be glad to render Peter Alexandrovitch a service, but the affair is not in my hands," and it is

evident that you are not likely to get your receipt earlier than in two months' time. As to the hay you were pleased to speak about, suppose we sell it for 3,000.'

And having marked 3,000 on the abacus he was silent one minute, looking first at the abacus, then into father's eyes, as if he meant: 'You see yourself how little it is! Besides, we shall lose in selling the hay, as you know yourself . . .'

He evidently had a large fund of arguments ready, and that was why my father interrupted him.

'I will not change the orders I have given,' he replied; 'but if a delay should really occur in the receipt of the money, there is nothing to be done; thou wilt have to take the necessary sum from the funds of Habarovka.'

'It shall be done, sir.'

I observed by the expression of his face, and the convulsive movement of his fingers, that this order gave great pleasure to Jacob.

He was one of our serfs—a very zealous man, and devoted to us; he was like all good stewards, extremely careful of his master's property, and had the most ridiculous ideas about his interests. He was always anxious to increase his master's property, at the expense of his mistress's, always endeavouring to prove that it was necessary to use the rent from her properties for Petrovskoje (the village in which we lived). At this moment he felt triumphant because he had succeeded.

After saying good-morning, our father told us that we had spent quite time enough uselessly in the

country, that we were not little boys any more, and that it was time for us to study seriously.

‘I think you know that I am going to Moscow to-night, and shall take you both with me,’ said he. ‘You will live at your grandmother’s, but your mamma will remain here with the girls. And you know that her only comfort will be to hear that you learn well, and that all are satisfied with you.’

Though the preparations we had noticed during the last days had made us expect something extraordinary, we were thunderstruck by the news. Vol-demar grew red, and gave our mother’s message in a trembling voice.

‘Is this what my dream predicted?’ thought I. ‘God grant there may be nothing worse to come.’

I felt very, very sorry to leave mother, but, at the same time, the thought that we were now considered as big boys filled me with joy.

‘If we are going to-day we shall not do any lessons to-day, of course ; that will be nice !’ thought I. ‘I am sorry for Karl Ivanovitch, however. He will be dismissed, of course, otherwise there would be no envelope prepared for him . . . I had rather learn all my life and stay here, so as not to leave mother, and not to wound poor Karl Ivanovitch’s feelings ; he is unhappy enough without that.’

These thoughts flashed through my mind. I did not stir from my place, staring at the black knots on my shoes.

Having said a few words to Karl Ivanovitch about the barometer, and having ordered Jacob not to feed the dogs, as he wished before setting off to follow the

hounds once more, after dinner, my father sent us to our lessons, contrary to my expectations, giving us the consolation of promising to take us to see the field-sports.

On the way upstairs I went for a moment on to the terrace, where my father's favourite hound, Milka, was winking in the sunshine, near the door.

'Dear Milka,' said I, caressing it, and kissing its muzzle, 'we are going to-day; good-bye! I shall never see you again.'

I was much affected, and burst into tears.

CHAPTER IV.

SCHOOL-HOURS.

KARL IVANOVITCH was in a very bad humour, as was evident by the way he knit his brows, and by the angry gesture with which he cast his frock-coat into the drawer, then put on his girdle, and marked with his nail what we were to learn in the book of dialogues. Voldemar learned pretty well; as to myself, I was so excited that I could do nothing. I looked senselessly at the book of dialogues for some time, but I was unable to read, through the tears which filled my eyes as I thought of the approaching separation; but when the time came to say the lesson to Karl Ivanovitch, who was sitting all the time with his eyes half shut (it was a very bad sign), when he came to the place where the question is: 'Wo kommen Sie her?''* and the answer is: 'Ich komme vom

* 'Whence do you come?'

Kaffe-haus,* I could no more restrain my tears, and my sobs prevented my answering: 'Haben Sie die Zeitung nicht gelesen?†' When the turn of calligraphy came I made such a number of blots from the tears that fell on the paper, that it was like writing with water on blotting-paper.

Karl Ivanovitch became angry, ordered me to kneel down, and repeated over and over again that it was all obstinacy, all humbug (his favourite word), threatened me with the ruler, and ordered me to beg his pardon, while I could not utter a word on account of my tears; at last, feeling that he had been unjust, he went into Nicolas's room and slammed the door.

The conversation in the diadka's room was heard in the schoolroom.

'Thou hast heard, I suppose, Nicolas, that the children are going to Moscow?' said Karl Ivanovitch, entering the room.

'Yes, sir.'

Probably Nicolas wished to rise, because Karl Ivanovitch said: 'Sit still, Nicolas, and then shut the door.' I left the corner, and stealthily approaching the door, began to listen to their conversation.

'However much good you may do to people, however attached to them you may be, you need never expect any gratitude from them; don't you think so too?' asked Karl Ivanovitch.

Nicolas, who was sitting near the window mending some boots, nodded affirmatively.

'I have lived twelve years in the house, and I can

* 'I come from the refreshment-room.'

† 'Have you not read the newspaper?'

swear, Nicolas,' continued Karl Ivanovitch, raising his eyes and his snuff-box to the ceiling—'I can swear that I have loved them and cared more for them than if they had been my own children. Do you remember, Nicolas, when Voldemar was in a burning fever? Do you remember how I sat by his bedside nine nights without closing my eyes all the time? Yes! then I was kind, dear Karl Ivanovitch, then I was necessary! but now,' added he, smiling ironically, '*now the children have ceased to be little boys, and it is time for them to begin to study seriously.* As if they do not study here, Nicolas!'

'How else are they to learn?' answered Nicolas, laying down the awl and stretching the waxed-ends of the thread with both hands.

'Now I am not wanted, therefore I am to be sent away. Where are their promises? Where is their gratitude? I love and esteem Natalia Nicolaevna,' said he, putting his hand to his heart, 'but what is she here? . . . Nicolas, her will in this house is no more than this!' With these words he threw with an expressive gesture a shred of the leather on to the floor. 'I know whose doing it is, and thanks to whom I am not wanted any more; it is because I do not flatter and fawn as *others* do. I always speak out before all,' added he proudly. 'God forgive them! They will not grow rich by my not being here, and with the help of God I shall manage to gain my living . . . shall I not, Nicolas?'

Nicolas raised his head and glanced at Karl Ivanovitch, as if wishing to ascertain whether he really could gain his living—but said nothing.

Karl Ivanovitch talked on in the same style for a long time ; he spoke about some general, who had better appreciated him, and in whose family he had lived before coming to us (it grieved me to hear this) ; he spoke about Saxony, about his parents, about his friend the tailor, Schönheit, and so on. . . .

I sympathized with his grief, and I was very sorry that my father and Karl Ivanovitch, both of whom I loved almost equally, did not understand each other ; I went again into the corner, and kneeling down again deliberated about the way in which a friendly feeling might be re-established between them.

Karl Ivanovitch, on returning to the schoolroom, ordered me to rise from my knees, and to prepare my copybook for dictation. When all was ready he sank majestically into the armchair, and in a voice which seemed to come out of some great depth, began to dictate the following words : ‘ Von al-len Lei-den-schaf-ten die grau-sam-ste ist . . . haben Sie geschrie-ben ? ’* Here he stopped, slowly took a pinch of snuff, and continued with renewed energy : ‘ Die grausamste ist, die Un-dank-bar-keit. . . . Ein grosses U. ’ † Expecting something more to come, after I had written the last word I looked at him.

‘ Punctum, ’ ‡ said he, with a slight smile, and made us a sign to give him our copybooks.

He read the sentence in which he had thus embodied his thoughts many times over, with various intonations, and every time with an expression of the

* ‘ Of all passions . . . have you written ? ’

† ‘ Ingratitude is the worst. . . . ’

‡ ‘ A full stop. ’

highest satisfaction; afterwards he set us a task of history, and sat down near the window. His face was not as morose as before; it wore the expression of a man satisfied with himself for having avenged an affront put upon him.

It was a quarter to one; but it seemed that Karl Ivanovitch did not yet intend to let us go; he set us new tasks again and again. Our bad humour and our appetites were rising. I eagerly followed with my eyes all the signs which generally proved that the dinner-hour was drawing near. A housemaid passed with some bast-string to clean the plates, the clatter of crockery was heard in the pantry, the moving of tables and setting of chairs in the dining-room; Mimi, Lùba, and Katenka (Katenka, the daughter of Mimi, was twelve years old) were returning from the garden, but Foka was not yet visible (Foka was the major-domo); it was he who always came to announce that dinner was ready. It was only then that we could leave our books and race downstairs without paying any attention to Karl Ivanovitch.

Footsteps were audible on the staircase; but they were not Foka's. I knew his gait, and could always recognise the creaking of his boots. The door opened, and a personage I had never seen before appeared.

CHAPTER V.

THE FANATIC.

A MAN of fifty came into the room; his long pale face was much scarred by the small-pox; he had long gray hair and a thin reddish beard. He was so tall,

that in order to pass through the door he was obliged not only to incline his head, but to bend his whole body. He was dressed in something like a caftan* or under-cassock, but it was all in tatters ; he held an enormous staff in his hand. On entering the room he struck the floor with it with all his might ; then twisting his eyebrows and opening an enormous mouth, began to laugh in the most dreadful and unnatural manner. He was blind of one eye, and the white pupil of that eye moved incessantly, and increased the repugnant expression of his ugly face.

‘ Ah, ah ! I have caught you ! ’ cried he, approaching Voldemar with short steps, and having taken hold of his head, began carefully to examine his crown ; then releasing him, he approached the table with a very grave look, and began to blow under the cloth and to cross it. ‘ Oh, ah, ah ! what a pity ! Oh, ah, ay ! how sad . . . my bosom friends . . . will fly away,’ said he in a tremulous voice, looking tenderly at Voldemar, and drying his tears, which were really falling on his sleeve.

His voice was harsh and hoarse, all his movements were hasty and abrupt, his speech was senseless and incoherent (he seldom used pronouns), but his accents were so touching, and his ugly yellow face had sometimes such a truly sad expression, that while listening to him it was impossible to help feeling a mixture of pity, fear, and grief.

He was a sort of idiot and wanderer, and his Christian name was Greecha.†

* Coat worn by Russian peasants.

† Diminutive of Gregory.

Whence did he come? Who were his parents? What had led him to choose the life of a wanderer? I only know that from the age of fifteen he had been considered an idiot, a fanatic; that he walked bare-foot summer and winter, visited various monasteries, gave little holy images as presents to those he liked, and always used enigmatical expressions, considered by some people as predictions; that nobody had ever seen him otherwise, that he occasionally went to see my grandmother; that some spoke of him as the unhappy son of rich parents, and an innocent, while others considered him as nothing but a peasant and an idle dog.

At last, the long-wished-for and punctual Foka made his appearance, and we went downstairs. Greecha, still sobbing and saying all kinds of silly things, followed us, knocking against each step of the staircase with his staff. Papa and mamma were walking arm-in-arm, talking in low voices. Maria Ivanovna sat affectedly in an armchair, symmetrically placed at right angles from the sofa, and was admonishing the girls, who were sitting close to her, in a stern, though suppressed voice. As soon as Karl Ivanovitch entered the room, she glanced at him, then quickly turned away, and her face wore an expression which seemed to say, 'I do not notice you, Karl Ivanovitch.' By the eager looks of the girls, it was evident that they longed to inform us of some very important fact, but for them it would have been a breach of etiquette, according to Mimi's principles, to have risen from their seats and come up to us. We were first to approach her and to say, 'Bonjour, Mimi!' then to bow, and after that we were allowed to talk.

What a tiresome person Mimi was! It was impossible to talk about anything in her presence: she always found everything shocking. Besides, she was continually teasing us with, 'Parlez donc Français,' and of course the more we were told not to do so, the more we longed to talk Russian; or, at dinner, just when one had got some delicious bit on one's plate, and did not want to be disturbed in one's enjoyment of it, she would invariably say either 'Mangez donc avec du pain,' or 'Comment est-ce que vous tenez votre fourchette?' What has she to do with us, I should like to know? Let her teach the girls; we have Karl Ivanovitch to teach us. I fully shared his dislike for 'others.'

'Ask mamma to take us to see the field-sports too,' said Katenka, in a whisper, seizing hold of me by my jacket, just as our elders had gone on in front into the dining-room.

'Very well; we shall try.'

Greecha had his dinner in the same room, but at a separate table; he did not raise his eyes from his plate, sighed heavily every now and then, made horrible grimaces, as if he were saying to himself: 'It is a pity. . . she has flown away. . . the dove will fly up to heaven. . . oh! there is a stone on the grave!' and so on.

Mamma had been very sad ever since the morning; the presence of Greecha, as well as his words and strange behaviour, evidently increased the feeling.

'I have a favour to ask of thee,' said she to papa, as she passed a plate with soup to him.

'What is it?'

‘Pray order thy frightful dogs to be locked up, because poor Greecha was within a hair’s-breadth of being bitten by them as he was going along the yard. They may throw themselves upon the children in the same way.’

Greecha, hearing his name, turned towards the table, and showing the tattered lappets of his coat, said, chewing his food at the same time :

‘He wished me to be worried to death . . . God did not allow it to be done. It is a sin to set dogs to worry a man ; it is a heavy sin ! Do not beat him for it, *elder** . . . Why should you beat him ? God will forgive . . . times are changed now.’

‘What is he saying ?’ asked father, looking at him attentively and sternly. ‘I do not understand him.’

‘But I do,’ answered mamma. ‘He told me that a hunter purposely set the dogs at him ; so he says that “he wished to worry him to death, but God did not permit it to be done ;” and he asks thee not to punish the hunter for it.’

‘Oh, that is it, is it ?’ said father. ‘How does he know that I want to punish the hunter ? Thou knowest I am not over-fond of these people,’ continued he in French ; ‘but I especially dislike this one, and think he must be——’

‘Ah ! pray do not say so, my dear,’ interrupted mamma, looking as if she were frightened ; ‘how dost thou know ?’

‘I think that I have had plenty of opportunities to study this kind of man—so many of them come to

* That was his usual mode of addressing all men.

thee ; they are all of the same stamp. It is always the same story. . . .’

It was evident that my mother was quite of another opinion on the subject, but did not care to argue the point.

‘Wilt thou pass me a patty, please?’ said she. ‘Are they nice to-day?’

‘But it makes me very angry,’ continued my father, taking a patty in his hand, and holding it at a distance, so that mamma could not reach it, ‘very angry, indeed, when I see that clever and well-educated people are imposed upon.’

And he struck the table with his fork.

‘I asked thee to pass me a patty,’ repeated she, stretching out her hand.

‘The police are quite right,’ continued father, moving his hand further away, ‘to put such people under arrest. Their only use is to impair the nerves of those whose nerves are weak enough as it is,’ added he, with a smile, on seeing how disagreeable the conversation was to mamma, and passed her the patty.

‘I can only say one thing : it is very difficult to believe that a man who, notwithstanding his sixty years, walks about barefoot both winter and summer, and wears chains weighing eighty pounds under his clothes without ever taking them off, and who has more than once refused every proposal of a comfortable living, with all his expenses paid for him—it is very difficult, I say, to believe that a man does so out of idleness.

‘As to his predictions,’ added she, with a sigh, after a few moments’ silence, ‘je suis payée pour y croire. I think I have told thee how Kirucha foretold my

deceased father, not only the day, but even the hour of his death.'

'Ah! what hast thou done?' said papa, smiling and raising his hand to his mouth on the side where Mimi was sitting (whenever he did so, I always listened to him with increased attention, expecting to hear something funny). 'Why hast thou reminded me of his feet? Now I have looked at them I can eat nothing more.'

The dinner drew to an end. Lubotchka and Katenka kept winking, turning about on their chairs, and betraying the greatest anxiety. All this winking meant: 'Why do you not ask papa to take us to see the field-sports?' I nudged Voldemar with my elbow; Voldemar nudged me in the same way, and at last made up his mind to speak. He began at first rather shyly, and then went on resolutely and bravely to explain that as we were going away that day we should be glad to have the girls with us in the field, that they might follow us in the 'lineika.'^{*} After a short conference between our elders the question was settled in our favour, and what was still better, mamma said she would go too.

CHAPTER VI.

PREPARATION FOR THE HUNT.

WHEN the dessert was served Jacob was called, and orders were given concerning the coach, the dogs and

* A sort of dogcart.

the riding-horses—all down to the least details, every horse even being called by its name. Voldemar's horse was lame of one foot, so papa ordered one of the hunter's horses to be saddled for him. The sentence, 'the hunter's horse,' sounded disagreeably on mamma's ears ; it seemed to her that a hunter's horse must be something like a furious wild beast, and that it would infallibly rush off and kill Voldemar. Poor mamma continued to repeat over and over again that during the whole excursion she should be tortured by her fears, in spite of all the exhortations of papa and Voldemar's assertion that he liked nothing better than to tear along at full speed.

After dinner, our elders went into the study to take their coffee ; we ran into the garden to stroll along the paths covered with yellow leaves, and to talk. We began by talking of Voldemar's riding the huntsman's horse, then about Lubotchka, who could not run as fast as Kate, then how interesting it would be to look at Greecha's chains, and so on ; but not a word was said of our parting. Our talk was interrupted by the rattling of the carriage, which drove up with a ragamuffin sitting on each spring. Behind the carriage came the hunters, accompanied by their dogs ; behind the hunters came the coachman Ignat on the horse Voldemar was to ride, and leading my old horse Kleffer by the bridle. We all rushed towards the hedge as the place whence all these interesting things could best be seen, and then ran shrieking and stamping upstairs to dress, longing to make ourselves look as like huntsmen as possible. One of the chief means to attain this end was

thrusting our trousers into our boots. Without delay we set to work, hastening to finish it as soon as possible, in order to run out to the door to enjoy the sight of the dogs and horses, and to have a talk with the huntsmen.

It was a sultry day. Little white clouds of the most fantastic shapes had been seen on the horizon from the morning; then a slight breeze arose and blew them together, so that the sun was sometimes hidden by them. But though the clouds came gliding over the sky, looking black and threatening, it was not fated that they should come down in a thunderstorm and spoil the last pleasure we were to enjoy for some time to come. Towards evening they began to disperse, some faded away, some disappeared below the horizon; others again, just above our heads, changed into transparently white scales; only one large black cloud still hung over the east. Karl Ivanovitch always knew the direction each cloud had taken; now he informed us that it was going towards Maslowka, that there would be no rain, and that the weather would be delightful.

Foka, notwithstanding his declining years, ran nimbly and quickly downstairs, roared out: 'Let the carriage drive up!' and stood with his legs far apart close to the door, just between the place where the two-seated droshky was to be driven up by the coachman and the threshold, like a man who did not need to be reminded of his duties. The ladies appeared, and after a little arguing as to the place each was to occupy, and the way one was to hold on by another (though it seemed to me quite unnecessary to hold

on by anybody), they took their seats, opened their umbrellas, and drove off. Just as the coach started, mamma, pointing to a horse, asked the coachman in a trembling tone :

‘ Is this horse for Voldemar Petrovitch ?’

And when the coachman answered affirmatively, she waved her hand and turned her head aside. In a state of the greatest excitement I got on to my horse and rode along, looking between its ears, and making various evolutions up and down the yard.

‘ Take care ; pray do not ride over the dogs,’ said one of the huntsmen to me.

‘ Never fear ; it is not the first time that I ride,’ answered I haughtily.

Voldemar mounted the huntsman’s horse not without a shudder, and, in spite of the firmness of his character, asked the coachman several times, while patting his neck :

‘ Is he quiet ?’

He looked very nice on horseback, just like a grown-up man. His thighs looked so well on the saddle that I quite envied him, especially as I could see by my shadow that I did not look half as handsome.

My father’s step was heard on the stairs ; the head huntsman called up the hounds, the huntsmen with the greyhounds called up theirs, and all prepared to set off. The groom led the horse to the door ; my father’s hounds, which had till that moment lain in very picturesque attitudes near the house, rushed towards him. Behind him ran Milka in a collar adorned with glass-beads. It always used to greet

each pack of hounds, playing with some, smelling others ; growling at some, or licking others.

Papa mounted his horse, and we rode off.

CHAPTER VII.

THE HUNT.

THE whipper-in, by name Turka, on a hook-nosed, bluish-looking horse, and with a shaggy hat on his head, an enormous bugle behind his shoulders, and a knife at his girdle, rode in front. Judging by the gloomy face and fierce looks of the man, one might have thought that he was going to a mortal combat rather than to a hunt. Near the hind-legs of his horse ran the harriers all close together like a speckled ball. It was sad to see the miserable fate which awaited the one that happened to lag behind. It had to use all its strength to pull back its companion, and when once it had done so, one of the whippers-in, who rode behind, cracked his whip over it, exclaiming : 'All together !' On leaving the gate, papa ordered the huntsmen and us to ride along the road, and turned into the field sown with rye.

The harvest was at its height. The large, bright, glittering field was bordered on one side by a high dark forest, which at that time seemed to me to be a distant mysterious point, behind which the world ended or only some desert countries existed. The whole field was covered with sheaves of corn and people. Here and there in the high and thick rye

the bent back of a woman might be seen amidst the swinging ears of corn, as she took them between her fingers, or some other woman bending over her baby in its cradle placed in the shade, or sheaves standing amidst the stubble studded with cornflowers ; on the other side you saw peasants dressed in shirts standing on carts and loading them with sheaves of corn, raising clouds of dust on the dry scorched field. The overseer (reeve) in boots and an 'armiak'* thrown over his shoulders, with a rod in his hand, perceiving papa when he was yet at some distance, took off his felt hat, and wiping his red-haired head and beard with a towel, bawled at the country-women. The chestnut horse on which my father rode paced lightly and nimbly along, every now and then bending his head, stretching the bridle, and with his thick tail driving away the gnats and flies which clung ravenously round him. Two greyhounds, with their tails bent like sickles, paced gracefully over the stubble close to the horse ; Milka ran in front, and, turning its head, seemed to be waiting for something. The hum of voices, the stamping of horses and noise of carts, the joyous whistling of the quails, the humming of insects which whirled in masses through the air, the smell of wormwood, straw, and horses' sweat ; the thousand different colours and shades cast by the burning sun on the light yellow stubble, the dark forest in the distance, the whitish purple clouds and white cobwebs stretched along the stubble, have all been seen, heard, or felt by me.

When we came to the Kalinovo forest we found the

* A peasant's overcoat.

carriage already there, and to our surprise we found a one-horse cart there besides, in which sat the butler. A 'samovar' peeped from under the straw; a tub with ices and several other attractive bundles and boxes were seen. There could be no doubt of it—we were to take tea, ices and fruit in the open air. We shouted for joy at the sight of the cart, for it had always been our greatest pleasure to take tea in the forest on the grass, or in general in some place where nobody had ever done so.

Turka approached the wood, stopped, and listened attentively to papa's detailed instructions as to the way they were to draw up and where they were to go (although he never acted up to the instructions he received and did as he chose), unleashed the dogs, mounted his horse, rode off whistling, and soon disappeared in the young birch-wood. The hounds showed their delight by wagging their tails; they shook themselves and then began following the track, still wagging their tails and trotting off in various directions.

'Hast thou a handkerchief?' asked my father.

I took it out of my pocket and showed it to him.

'Well, tie it round this gray dog's neck——'

'Girand?' asked I, with the look of a connoisseur.

'Yes, and run along the road. When thou reachest the meadow stop there, and mind—thou art not to come back without a hare to me. . . .'

I tied my handkerchief round the shaggy neck of Girand, and ran as fast as I could to the appointed place. My father laughed and called out after me:

'Make haste, otherwise thou wilt be too late.'

Girand stopped every moment, raising his ears and listening to the hunters' hallooing. It was in vain that I used all my strength to move him from the spot; he did not move till I began to cry 'Tally ho! hallo!' Then Girand began to run so fast that I could hardly hold him back, and fell more than once before I reached the appointed place. Having chosen a shady and smooth spot near the root of a high oak, I lay down on the grass, made Girand lie down near me, and began to wait. My imagination, as is always the case in similar instances, far exceeded the reality itself. I fancied I was already hunting down the third hare when the first hound was heard in the forest. The voice of Turka resounded louder and more animatedly in the air; the hound bayed shrilly over and over again; a second voice, a deep-toned one, joined the first, then a third, a fourth. . . . These voices were alternately silent or interrupting each other. The sounds got louder and louder by degrees, and at last they joined into one sonorous and continuous baying. The whole wood seemed full of sound, and the hounds were in all their glory.

My heart sank within me. Fixing my eyes upon the outskirts of the forest, and smiling without any ostensible reason, I was in a profuse perspiration, and although the drops rolled down my chin, and tickled me by so doing, I did not dry them. It seemed to me that this must be the decisive moment. This state of intense expectation was too unnatural to last long. The hounds broke into loud baying near the outskirts of the wood, then gradually went farther and farther; no hare was to be seen. I began to

look about me. It was the same with Girand ; he first tried to escape, uttering fierce howls, then, crouching down near me and placing his head on my knees, lay quite still for some time.

Near the bare roots of the oak, under the branches of which I was sitting, I observed some ants, which swarmed over the gray dry ground amidst the dry oak leaves and acorns, or the dry patches of the yellow-green moss. They hurried on, one after the other, along the tracks traced out by themselves ; some of them heavily laden, others without any burden at all. I took a switch into my hand and barricaded the road. It was curious to see how some, scorning all danger, crept under it, while others climbed over it : and others again, especially those which bore heavy burdens, seemed quite puzzled, and did not know what to do. They stopped, then tried to find a circuit, turned back or crept along the switch to my hand, as if intending to crawl to the sleeve of my jacket. My attention was called from these interesting observations by a butterfly with yellow wings, which whirled temptingly before my eyes. As soon as I noticed it it flew two or three steps farther off from me, hovered over an almost withered white flower, and finally settled down upon it. I did not know whether it was enjoying the warmth of the sun, or drawing the sap from the grass, but it seemed very happy. Every now and then it flapped its little wings, and pressed close to the flower. At last it grew quite still. I laid my head upon both my arms and looked at it with interest.

Suddenly Girand bayed, and sprang forwards so impetuously that I nearly fell. I looked back. Just on the outskirts of the forest I saw a hare bounding past, one ear down and the other raised. The blood rose to my head, and, forgetting everything else, I uttered a long cry, let the dog go, and ran after it. But no sooner had I done so than I began to repent. The hare stopped a moment, then bounded forward, and I saw it no more.

How ashamed I felt, when after the hounds, which had all followed the track of the hare, appeared Turka from behind the bushes! He saw the mistake I had made (which consisted in my not having waited), and glancing scornfully at me, only said: 'Oh, master!' But how much did these words express! It would have been better for me if he had hung me on to the saddle as he did the hare.

I stood a long time on the same spot in the greatest despair, without calling back my dog; and smiting my leg, I could not help saying over and over again: 'Oh dear! What have I done?'

I heard the hunters pursue the hare farther; I heard the noise of the hunt resound in another part of the wood, knew that the hare was taken, and heard Turka sound his large bugle to call the dogs together, but I did not stir from my place . . .

CHAPTER VIII.

OUR GAMES.

THE hunt was over. A carpet was spread out in the shade of the young birch-trees; all the company sat

there in a circle. The butler, Gavriilo, trampling the sappy green grass under his feet, was wiping the plates and taking plums and peaches, rolled up in leaves, out of a box. The sun glistened through the green branches of the young birches, and cast its bright light on the embroidered carpet, on my legs, and even upon the bald hot head of Gavriilo. A light breeze playing amidst the leaves, and over my hair and my hot face, effectually cooled me.

When we had had our share of ices and fruit, it was of no use to sit on the carpet any longer, and in spite of the slanting rays of the hot sun we rose and went to play.

‘Well, but what game shall we play at?’ said Lubotchka, winking and jumping about on the grass. ‘Let us play at Robinson.’

‘No, it is very tiresome,’ answered Voldemar, throwing himself lazily on to the ground and chewing leaves. ‘You always choose Robinson! If you absolutely wish to find something to do, let us build an arbour.’

Voldemar was evidently giving himself airs. He was most likely very proud of having ridden the huntsman’s horse, and only pretended to be very tired; or perhaps it was that even at that age he had too much good sense and too little imagination to find pleasure in playing at ‘Robinson.’ The game consisted in representing some passages out of the ‘Robinson Suisse’ which we had read a short time ago.

‘Please do . . . Why do you not wish to give us pleasure?’ insisted the girls. ‘You may be Charles

or Ernest, or their father, whatever you like,' continued Katenka, trying to raise him by the sleeve of his jacket.

'Indeed I do not feel inclined to play—it is tiresome!' answered Voldemar, stretching himself, and at the same time smiling in a very self-satisfied manner.

'It would have been better to stay at home, then, if nobody wishes to play,' said Lubotchka through her tears.

She was a dreadful cry-baby.

'Well, come along, then; only pray leave off crying. I cannot bear to see it.'

But Voldemar's condescension gave us very little pleasure; on the contrary, his lazy, weary look spoiled the whole charm of the play. When we sat down on the ground, and fancying ourselves going along the river, and fishing, began to row with all our might, Voldemar remained sitting with his arms crossed, without taking part in the play, and in a posture which had nothing of a fisherman's in it. I made the observation to him, but he answered that we might move our arms ever so much, we should neither gain nor lose anything by it, and would still remain on the same spot. Unwillingly I agreed with him. When, fancying myself a sportsman, I went towards the forest shouldering a stick, Voldemar lay down on his back, and throwing his arms over his head, told me to fancy that he was going too. All this naturally resulted in cooling our interest in the play; and what was still worse, we could not help feeling that Voldemar was quite right.

I know very well that it is quite impossible to fire

a stick at a bird ; that it is only play. When once we begin to reason in such a way, it will be impossible likewise to drive on chairs ; yet I know that Voldemar has not yet forgotten how, during the long winter evenings, we used to cover a chair with our handkerchiefs and fancy it a barouche ; one of us was coachman, the other footman ; the girls usually occupied the middle ; then four chairs were four-in-hand, and we were going on a journey. And what delightful adventures took place during the journey ! and how merrily and quickly the winter evenings passed ! . . . If we reason, no game will be possible. And once there are no games, what shall we have left ?

CHAPTER IX.

CALF-LOVE.

LUBOTCHKA, pretending to be gathering some kind of American fruit, picked a leaf from the tree on which there was an enormous worm, and then, evidently frightened at the sight of it, she threw it on to the ground, and, raising her arms, sprang aside as if she expected something to rush upon her. The play ceased, and we all pressed our heads together and stooped over the curiosity.

I examined it over the shoulder of Katenka, who was endeavouring to get it on a leaf which she put in its way.

I have noticed that many girls have the habit of twitching their shoulders in order to rearrange their

dresses, which, being open about the neck, are apt to slip off their shoulders. I remember even now how angry Mimi always was when the girls thus twitched their shoulders, and said every time: 'C'est un geste de femme de chambre.'

While stooping over the worm, Katenka made the very movement, and at the same time the breeze raised the kerchief on her white neck. Her shoulder was only two inches from my lips. I did not look at the worm any longer, but imprinted a burning kiss on Katenka's shoulder. She did not turn, but I noticed that not only her neck but even her ears grew red. Voldemar said disdainfully, without raising his head:

'How very tender!'

But my eyes were full of tears.

I did not lose sight of Katenka any more. I had long been used to her pretty fresh face, and had always been fond of it; but now I began to observe it more attentively, and loved it more. When we approached the elders, papa told us to our great joy that, by our mother's desire, our departure was put off till the following morning.

We returned home together. Voldemar and I, wishing to surpass each other in horsemanship, bravely cantered near the coach. My shadow on the ground looked longer now, and so I supposed that I was quite a fine horseman, but my feeling of self-conceit was soon dispersed by the following circumstance: Wishing entirely to charm all those who were sitting in the coach, I remained a little behind, and then, with the help of both whip and legs, I put my horse

to a gallop, and, in what I considered a natural but graceful attitude, I intended to dart past them like a whirlwind on the side where Katenka sat. I only hesitated as to whether it would be better to rush past in absolute silence, or to call out. But my nasty horse, coming up to those that drew the coach, stopped so suddenly, in spite of all my efforts, that I bounded from the saddle on to the horse's neck, and was on the point of falling.

CHAPTER X.

WHAT SORT OF MAN MY FATHER WAS.

MY father was a man of the past century, and had that slight tinge of chivalry, enterprise, self-possession, gallantry and debauchery which had been the distinguishing trait of the young men of that century. He looked with scorn at the present generation; the reason lay as much in his innate pride as in a secret spite that now he could not enjoy either the same good luck or have the same influence as he had formerly. The chief passions of his life were cards and women. In the course of his life he had won millions at cards, and had fallen in love with an endless number of women of all classes.

A well-shaped and noble stature, a rather strange gait, a habit of shrugging his shoulders, small eyes which always looked as if he were smiling, a large aquiline nose, irregular lips which closed rather ungracefully but pleasantly at the same time, a defect of pronunciation—*i.e.*, a sort of lisp— and a bald

head—such was the appearance of my father as I remember him—an appearance which did not in any way prevent his being considered a man *à bonnes fortunes* by all, and especially by those whom he wished to please.

He knew how to have the upper hand over everybody. Though he had never belonged to the highest circles of society, he had always kept the best company, and had invariably been esteemed by all. He knew the exact degree of pride and self-confidence which, without wounding anybody's feelings, would raise him in the opinion of the world. He was eccentric; sometimes he made that eccentricity pass muster instead of good-breeding and wealth. There was nothing in the world that could excite a feeling of surprise in him; however brilliant his position might be, he seemed to be born to it. It was impossible not to envy him the way he managed to conceal from others and to banish from his own mind all that was gloomy, trivial, or disagreeable in life. He was a connoisseur in all the things which conduce to comfort and pleasure, and knew how to make the most of them. His hobby was the fashionable connections which he had formed, partly through his marriage with my mother, and partly through friends of his youth, against whom he bore a grudge at the bottom of his heart, because they had risen in rank whilst he was still but a retired lieutenant of the Guards. Like all ex-military men, he did not understand how to dress according to the fashion, but instead of that his dress was always elegant, though rather eccentric. His clothes were always broad and

light ; his linen was very fine, with an open collar and ruffs . . . indeed, everything he put on suited his noble stature, his strong constitution, his bald forehead, and his calm and self-confident manners. He was sensible and even lachrymose. It sometimes happened that when reading aloud, if he came to some pathetic passage, his voice would become tremulous, his eyes would fill with tears, and he would angrily throw the book aside. He liked music, often sang romances written by his friend A——, some gipsy songs, and a few opera tunes to the accompaniment of the piano ; but he did not care for classical music, and therefore, without paying any attention to public opinion, he frankly said that Beethoven's sonatas made him sleepy, and that he knew nothing better than 'Do not wake me, young girl,' as sung by Miss Semenova, and 'There is not one,' as executed by the gipsy woman Tatiana. His disposition was one of those which require spectators in order to do a good deed, and he only valued or esteemed what was valued or esteemed by others. It is very difficult to say if he had any moral convictions. His life was so full of all kinds of impulses, that he had no time to think about them, and besides, he had been so happy in his life that he did not feel it necessary to do so.

As he grew old he attained a greater degree of firmness in his convictions and rules of conduct, though they were always subservient to the practical side of life. The ways of life which led either to his happiness or his pleasure were alone approved of by him, and he considered each man bound to follow

them. He spoke eloquently, and this capacity, it seems to me, increased the laxity of his principles; he could represent the same action by turns either in the light of a delightful frolic or a mean, vile deed.

CHAPTER XI.

HOW WE PASSED OUR TIME IN THE LIBRARY AND DRAWING-ROOM.

IT was growing dark already when we came home. Mamma sat down to the piano, and we children brought paper, pencils, paints, and after settling ourselves at the round table, began to draw. I had only blue paints; but notwithstanding that, I resolved to draw a hunt. It took me but a few moments to paint a blue boy on a blue horse and several blue hounds; but I did not exactly know if I might make the hare blue, too, and I ran into the library to consult my father. He was reading, and answered my question, 'Are there any blue hares?' without raising his head.

'Yes, yes, my boy; there are.'

On returning to the round table I painted a blue hare; then the idea occurred to me to change the hare into a blue bush. I did not quite like it, so I changed it into a tree, then into a stack, then into a cloud; at last I had dirtied the whole paper with blue so awfully that I grew quite cross, tore it to pieces, and went to slumber in an easy-chair.

In the meantime mamma was playing the 'Second Piano-Concert' of Field, who had been her teacher. I

was sleepy, and light bright clear pictures of the past arose in my fancy ; but when she began to play Beethoven's ' *Sonate Pathétique*,' melancholy, painful, and even gloomy recollections crowded into my mind. As these two pieces were very often played by mamma, I can remember perfectly well the feeling they excited in me. This feeling was like a remembrance : but a remembrance of what ? It almost seemed as if I remembered what had never existed.

Just opposite the place where I sat was the door which led into the library, and I saw Jacob as well as some long-bearded men in ' *caftans* ' enter it. The door was immediately closed behind them. ' Well,' thought I, ' business has begun.' It seemed to me that there could be nothing in the whole world more important than the business which was transacted in that library. I was confirmed in the idea by the fact that all approached the door of the library on tiptoe, and talked in whispers ; thence my father's loud voice was often heard, and I always felt attracted by the smell of his cigar, though I hardly knew the reason why. While dozing in the easy-chair I was surprised to hear a well-known creaking of boots in the butler's room. Karl Ivanovitch approached the room on tiptoe, and knocked gently at the door. He had a gloomy, resolute expression on his face, and carried several notes in his hand. He was admitted, and the door closed again.

' I am afraid some misfortune will happen,' thought I. ' Karl Ivanovitch is out of temper ; he is desperate' . . . and I again fell into a doze.

No disaster happened, however ; in an hour the

same creaking of boots awoke me. Karl Ivanovitch, drying his eyes—which, as I saw, were full of tears—with his pocket-handkerchief, came out of the library and went upstairs, muttering something to himself. Immediately afterwards my father entered the drawing-room.

‘Dost thou know what I have just decided upon?’ asked he gaily, putting his arm on mamma’s shoulder.

‘What, my dear?’

‘I intend to take Karl Ivanovitch with the children. We will find room for him in the britchka.* They are accustomed to him, and he seems to me to be devoted to them; seven hundred roubles a year are not much, *et puis au fond c’est un très bon diable.*’

I could not understand why my father was abusing Karl Ivanovitch.

‘I am very glad for the children and for him,’ answered mamma; ‘he is a good old man.’

‘If thou hadst seen how deeply he was moved when I told him that he might keep the five hundred roubles as a present . . . but the account he brought me was great fun. It was worth looking at,’ added he, smiling, and handing her a bit of paper in Karl Ivanovitch’s handwriting. ‘Is not it ridiculous?’

The contents of the note were as follows :

‘Two fish-hooks for the children, 70 copecks.

‘Coloured paper, gilt border, glue, and a model for making boxes, presents made them, 6 roubles, 55 copecks.

‘A book and a bow, as presents for the children, 8 roubles, 16 copecks.

* A half-covered vehicle.

‘Trousers for Nicolas, 7 roubles.

‘A gold watch promised me by Peter Alexandrovitch, to be brought by him from Moscow in the year 18—, 170 roubles.

‘Thus an amount of 159 roubles, 79 copecks to be paid to Karl Mauer, besides his salary.’

Examining Karl Ivanovitch’s note, in which he requested to be paid not only for the money spent by him for presents, but even for the present promised to himself, everyone might consider him an unfeeling, interested egotist, and yet everybody would be wrong.

On entering the library with some notes in his hand, and with a speech ready prepared in his mind, he intended eloquently to place before my father’s eyes all the ill-usage borne by him at our house ; but when he began to speak in the same touching manner and the same tender intonations in his voice as he generally used when dictating to us, he himself fell under the influence of his own eloquence, and the effect was that when he came to the words, ‘Sad as it must be for me to leave the children,’ he lost the thread of his discourse, his voice became tremulous, and he was forced to take his checkered handkerchief out of his pocket.

‘Yes, Peter Alexandrovitch,’ continued he in a tearful voice (these words were an addition to the speech he had prepared), ‘I am so accustomed to the children that I do not know what I shall do without them. Let me stay without any salary,’ added he, drying his tears with one hand, while handing the bill to my father with the other.

Knowing Karl Ivanovitch’s kindness of heart, I can

confidently affirm that he was sincere in what he said ; but the way in which the bill could be made to agree with his words still remains a mystery for me.

‘ You are sorry, and I should be still more sorry to part with you,’ answered my father, tapping him on the shoulder ; ‘ I have changed my mind.’

Greecha entered the room shortly before supper. From the very moment he entered our house, he did not cease sighing and weeping, and that, in the opinion of those who believed in his ability to foretell the future, was a sure sign that some disaster was to overwhelm our family. At last he took his leave of us for the night, saying that he intended to depart the next morning. I winked at Voldemar, and left the room.

‘ What is the matter ?’

‘ If thou wouldst like to see Greecha’s chains we must go upstairs ; Greecha will sleep in the second room, and we shall be able to see all from the lumber-room.’

‘ Well, wait here ; I will call the girls.’

The girls soon came, and we went upstairs. After quarrelling some time about who was to be the first to enter the dark lumber-room, we took our places, and began to wait.

CHAPTER XII.

GREECHA.

WE all felt rather nervous in the dark ; we pressed close to each other without uttering a single word. Greecha entered the room with his noiseless step

almost immediately after us. He held his staff in one hand, a tallow-candle in a copper candlestick in the other. We sat breathless.

'Our Lord Jesus Christ! Our Lady, most holy Virgin! Glory be to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost' . . . repeated he over and over again, with different intonations in his voice, and the abbreviations natural to those who repeat the same sentences closely one after the other.

With a prayer on his lips he placed his staff in a corner, and began to undress himself. After having ungirdled his old black belt, he took off his ragged nankeen 'sipoon,'* and folding it carefully up, hung it on the back of a chair. His countenance did not wear its usual expression of haste or stupidity any longer; on the contrary, he was calm, melancholy, and even stately. His manners were slow and pensive.

When he had nothing but his underclothes on he slowly sat down on the bed, made the sign of the cross on all sides, and with an effort (as was evident by his knitting his brows) set his chains to rights under the shirt. After having sat quite still for some time, and having carefully examined his ragged linen, he roused himself, and saying a prayer, lifted the candle to a level with the image-stand, where there were several images, and crossing himself, turned the candle with the flame upside down. It went out crackling.

The full moon shone straight into the windows, which looked out into the forest. The long and white figure of the fanatic was lighted by the pale

* A kind of peasant coat.

silvery rays of the moon on one side, while the other was enshrouded in darkness ; and together with the shadows cast by the window-frames on the floor and the wall, reached the ceiling. The watchman's rattle was heard in the yard.

Crossing his enormous hands over his breast, bowing his head, and continually sighing deeply, Greecha stood before the images in silence, then knelt down with difficulty and began to pray.

At first he repeated well-known prayers in a low voice only, emphasizing a few words, then repeated them again louder, and with greater animation. He began to use his own words, endeavouring with evident effort to express himself in the Slavonic language. His words were incoherent, but touching. He prayed for all his benefactors (he called all those who gave him shelter 'benefactors'), amongst others for my mother and us. He prayed for himself, asked God to pardon him his heavy sins, and repeated : 'O God, forgive my enemies !' He rose with a groan, and repeating the same words over and over again, prostrated himself several times in spite of the weight of the chains, which knocked against the floor every time with a dry, sharp sound.

Voldemar pinched my foot hard, but I did not even turn round, only rubbed the sore spot with my hand, and, full of childish wonder, pity, and reverence, continued to follow all Greecha's motions with my eyes, and to listen to every word he said.

Instead of the fun and laughter I had expected when I went into the lumber-room, I trembled, and my heart throbbed.

Greecha remained a long time in this state of religious ecstasy and extempore prayer. He repeated over and over again, either '*God have mercy upon us,*' each time with greater force of expression, or, '*God forgive me, teach me how to live . . . teach me how to live, O Lord!*' These last words at times seemed to be said as if he expected now at the very moment to hear the answer. At times again, only mournful lamentations were heard . . . Then he rose, folded his hands together on his breast, and was silent.

I noiselessly thrust my head in at the door, without daring to breathe. Greecha was motionless; heavy sighs rent his breast; a tear stood in his dim squinting eye.

'Thy will be done!' suddenly exclaimed he with an expression which cannot be rendered, and falling with his forehead against the floor, burst into sobs like a child.

Years have gone by since that time. Many a remembrance of the past has lost its importance and has become but a confused fancy for me; even the wanderer, Greecha, has long ended his last pilgrimage; but the impression produced upon me by him, and the feeling aroused in me, will never die out of my memory.

Oh, Greecha! thou great Christian! Thy belief was so deep that thou couldst feel the nearness of God; thy love was so great that the words flowed from thy mouth freely; thou didst not control them by thy reason . . . And how greatly didst thou glorify His greatness when, unable to find any words, thou didst fall on to the ground with tears!

The emotion with which I listened to Greecha could not last long, in the first place, because my curiosity was satisfied ; in the second, because I had a cramp in my foot from sitting still so long, and I longed to take part in the whispering and romping which were heard in the dark lumber-room behind me. Somebody touched my hand, and asked in a whisper : ' Whose hand is it ? ' It was quite dark, but by the touch and the voice which whispered in my ear, I knew it to be Katenka.

Quite unconsciously I grasped her arm, with its short sleeve, and pressed my lips to it. Katenka must have been surprised, and drew away her arm ; in doing so she struck against a broken chair which was in the room. Greecha raised his head, looked round, and saying a prayer, began to make the sign of the cross over all the corners of the room. We left our lurking-place noisily, but talking in whispers.

CHAPTER XIII.

NATALIA SAVISHNA.

IT was in the middle of the last century that *Natashka*,* a merry, plump, and red-cheeked girl, rambled barefoot all day long about the village of Kabarovka. Thanks to the faithful services of her father, a clarinet-player, Savva by name, she was, at his request, appointed by my grandmother to be numbered amongst my grandmother's maid-servants. The maid-servant *Natashka* was distinguished by

* Diminutive for Nathalie.

the mildness of her temper and her zeal. When my mother was born, and a nurse was wanted, the duty was entrusted to Natashka. In this new sphere she again won both praise and rewards for her activity, trustworthiness and attachment to her young mistress. But the powdered hair, the stockings and buckles of the handy young butler Foka, whose duties led to frequent intercourse between him and Natalia, captivated her simple but loving heart. She even made up her mind at last to go to my grandfather herself, and beg him to give her leave to marry Foka. My grandfather took it for ingratitude, grew angry, and punished poor Natalia by exiling her into one of his steppe villages as cow-keeper. In six months' time, however, as nobody could be found able to fill the place of Natalia, she was recalled to her former duties. On returning from her banishment she appeared before my grandfather, looking like a cinder-wench, fell at his feet, and touchingly begged to be reinstated in his good graces, and that her former folly should be forgiven, swearing that it should never return. And she was true to her word.

From that time Natashka began to be called Natalia Savishna,* began to wear caps, and lavished the whole stock of love which she possessed upon her young mistress.

When a governess took her place she was made housekeeper, and the linen and provisions were entrusted to her. She fulfilled her new duties with the same zeal and love. She only lived for her master's property; everywhere saw expense, dilapida-

* A more respectful denomination.

tion, and theft, and endeavoured with all her might to resist them.

On the day mamma was married she called Natalia Savishna to her, and wishing to reward Natalia's twenty years' service and attachment to the family, she spoke in the most flattering terms of her gratitude and love to her, handed Natalia Savishna a stamped paper by which she became free,* and added that she was to receive a pension of 300 roubles yearly, whether she continued in her service or not. Natalia Savishna listened in silence, then, taking the document into her hands, looked at it with a very cross face, muttered some inaudible words, and ran away, slamming the door. Mamma could not understand the motive of such strange conduct, and, a few minutes after, entered Natalia Savishna's room. She was sitting on her trunk, with very red eyes, turning and twisting her handkerchief between her fingers, and looking fixedly at the torn document, which lay scattered in bits on the floor before her.

'What is the matter with you, my dear Natalia Savishna?' asked mamma, taking her hand.

'Nothing,' answered she. 'It seems you hate me, since you want to drive me away from the house. . . . Well, I will go.'

She drew her hand away, and with difficulty restraining her tears, wished to leave the room. Mamma stopped, embraced her, and they both burst into tears.

Ever since I can remember myself, I remember Natalia Savishna, and her love and kindness; but it is only now that I have learnt their full value; at that

* Not a serf.

time it never came into my head to think what a rare and truly good creature this old woman was. Not only did she never speak about herself, but she never even seemed to have a thought about herself: her whole life was a life of love and self-denial. I was so accustomed to her disinterested and fond love for us, that I could not imagine it otherwise, and never felt thankful to her, and never asked myself, 'Is she happy? Is she contented with her lot?'

I often used to run away from my lesson, under some pretext or other; and, sitting down in her little room, began to build castles in the air, aloud, without minding her. She was always busy, either knitting stockings, or ransacking the boxes which took up nearly the whole of her room, or counting the linen, and listening to all the nonsense I talked about the time when I should be a general, and marry a great beauty, buy a reddish horse, build myself a crystal house, and write to all Karl Ivanovitch's relations to come from Saxony to live at my house, and so on; and she would say: 'Yes, my dear, yes.' Generally, just as I was going back, she would open the blue box on the lid of which, inside, some pictures were pasted. I seem to see them before me now—the figure of a hussar in colours, a picture taken off a pomatum-pot, and a drawing of Voldemar's. She would take some perfuming paper out, light it, and waving it about, would observe:

'This perfume is from Otchakof. When your late grandfather—God rest his soul!—went to war against the Turks, he brought it from there. It is the last bit,' she would add, with a sigh.

All sorts of things were to be found in the boxes that filled her room. If anybody wanted anything, we would say, 'We must ask Natalia Savishna,' and, indeed, after ransacking a little she found the thing that was wanting, and handing it to us, would say: 'It is well I put it by.' And there were thousands of things in the trunk which nobody in the house except her knew of or cared about.

Once I grew angry with her. It happened thus. As I was pouring myself out a glass of 'kvass'* at dinner, I let the decanter fall, and spilt the beverage on the tablecloth.

'Call in Natalia Savishna; let her see what her pet has done!' said mamma.

Natalia Savishna came in, and seeing the mess I had made, shook her head; then mamma whispered something to her, and she left the room, shaking her finger at me.

After dinner, feeling very merry, and jumping about, I ran into the hall, when, lo and behold! from behind the door darted Natalia Savishna with the tablecloth in her hand, caught me, and in spite of my desperate resistance began to rub my face with the wet part of the cloth, repeating: 'Thou shalt not dirty the tablecloth another time!' I was so offended that I burst into tears of rage.

'How!' said I to myself, walking up and down the room half choked with sobs; 'Natalia Savishna, or rather Natalia, simply says *thou* to me, and even strikes my face with the damp tablecloth as if I were a servant-boy. It is too bad!'

* A sort of cider.

As soon as Natalia Savishna saw that I was sobbing, she ran away, leaving me to walk up and down, deliberating how to be revenged upon the insolent Natalia for the insult she had offered me.

In a few minutes Natalia Savishna came back, approached me timidly, and tried to pacify me.

‘Do not cry, my darling, do not cry . . . Forgive me; I am a fool . . . it was all my fault . . . Pray forgive me, my darling . . . there is something for you.’

She drew from under her shawl a red paper packet in which were two sweetmeats and one dried fig, and gave it to me with her trembling hand. I was unable to look the kind old woman in the face. I turned aside, took her present, and my tears flowed afresh; but it was not from anger any longer, but from love and shame.

CHAPTER XIV.

OUR PARTING.

THE day after the events described by me in the preceding chapter, about twelve o'clock in the morning, the barouche and the half-open carriage stood before the door. Nicolas was dressed for travelling—*i.e.*, his trousers were stuck into his boots, and his old coat was girded on in the most solid manner with a sash. He was standing in the vehicle putting our overcoats and pillows under the seats; and when it seemed to him that it was too high, he seated himself on the pillows and jumped upon them, in order to press them down.

‘For mercy’s sake, Nicolas Dmitrievitch, will you let me place my master’s casket in your barouche?’ said my father’s valet, quite out of breath, and leaning out of the open carriage; ‘it is very small. . . .’

‘You ought to have told me before Mihei Ivanovitch,’ answered Nicolas quickly and looking vexed, then threw a parcel to the bottom of the vehicle with all his strength. ‘By God, I am quite perplexed as it is, and you are come teasing about your caskets,’ added he, taking his cap off and wiping the large drops of perspiration off his sunburnt forehead.

Servants in coats, caftans, smock-frocks, without their caps; women in coarse gowns and striped shawls, with babies in their arms, and barefooted children assembled near the entrance, looking at the carriages and talking to each other. One of our coachmen, a bent old man in a winter hat and ‘armiak,’* held the draught-bar of the barouche in his hand, handling it and thoughtfully examining the underframe; the other, a stately young fellow, in a white smock-frock with red fustian gussets, in a black felt cap, which he moved either towards his right ear or towards the left while scratching his fair curly hair, then laid his armiak on the coach-box, threw the reins there too, and lashing right and left with his plaited whip, looked either at his boots or at the coachmen who were greasing the vehicle. One of them was holding the lever; the second was stooping over the wheel carefully greasing the axle, and, as if not to let any grease be lost on the stick, he even greased the outward sides of the wheel with it. The over-worked and various-

* A peasant’s overcoat.

coloured post-horses stood near the gate, driving away the flies by waving their tails. Some of them, setting their shaggy and swollen feet firm, closed their eyes and dozed ; others, tired of standing still, rubbed against each other or plucked the leaves and stems of the hard dark-coloured fern which grew near the entrance. Several retrievers, breathing heavily, were lying in the sunshine ; others were walking about in the shade under the barouche and vehicle, licking the fat upon the axles. The air seemed impregnated with a dusty mist ; the horizon was of a grayish-purple hue ; not a cloud was to be seen. A violent east wind raised clouds of dust along the road and fields, bent the tops of the tall lindens and birch-trees in the garden, and carried away the faded yellow leaves. I was sitting near the window, impatiently awaiting the end of all these preparations.

When all were assembled in the drawing-room near the round table, in order to pass some last moments together, it did not occur to me that a very sad moment awaited us. The most trivial thoughts filled my mind. I asked myself : Which coachman would drive the carriage, and which was to go with the barouche ? Who was to go with father, and who was to go with Karl Ivanovitch ? and why they wished to wrap me up in a scarf and a wadded overcoat ? As if I were so delicate ! I shall not be frozen, I suppose ? I wish it were over, and we were in the carriages and on our way.

‘ To whom am I to give the list of the children’s linen ? ’ asked Natalia Savishna, entering the room with red eyes and a note in her hand, addressing mamma.

‘Give it to Nicolas, and then come and say good-bye to the children.’

The old woman wished to say something, but suddenly stopped, covered her face with her handkerchief, and, waving her hand, left the room. My heart felt rather heavier when I saw that motion; but my impatience to set off was more intense than any other feeling, and I continued to listen quite indifferently to the conversation between my father and mother. They talked about things which evidently did not interest either of them; about what was to be bought for home; what was to be said to Princess Sophie, and to Madame Julie; was it likely that the roads were good.

Foka entered, and, stopping on the threshold, announced ‘The horses are ready,’ precisely in the way he used to say, ‘Dinner is ready.’ I noticed that mamma shuddered and grew pale when she heard the words, as if she had not expected to hear them.

Foka was ordered to shut all the doors in the room.* I thought it very funny, as if we were all hiding from somebody.

When all were seated Foka also sat down on the end of the chair, and at the same time the door creaked, and all looked round. Natalia Savishna hastily entered the room, and, without raising her eyes, sat down near the door on one chair with Foka. The picture is as fresh in my memory as if it were still before my eyes; the bald head of Foka with his

* It is the custom in Russia for all those who are setting off on a journey to sit down in perfect silence for a few moments before their departure, with a mental prayer for safety.

wrinkled immovable face, and beside him the bent kind-looking figure in a cap, from under which peeped her gray hair. They press close to each other on the chair, and both feel awkward.

I continued to feel indifference and impatience. The ten seconds during which we sat with closed doors seemed an hour to me. At last all rose, each made the sign of the cross, and began to say adieu. My father embraced mamma, and kissed her several times.

‘Do not cry, dear!’ said papa. ‘We are not leaving you for ever.’

‘It is very sad, all the same!’ answered mamma, in a voice tremulous with tears.

When I heard that voice, saw her trembling lips and her eyes full of tears, I forgot all, and felt so sad, so miserable and so terrified, that I would much rather have run away than said good-bye to her. I understood only then that, while embracing my father, she was bidding us farewell too.

She kissed and blessed Voldemar so many times, that, thinking she would now turn to me, I ran towards her, but in vain ; she continued to bless him, pressing him again and again to her heart. At last I threw my arms round her and wept bitterly, remembering nothing but my sorrow.

As we went to take our seats in the carriages, the tiresome bond-servants all came to the door to bid us farewell. The phrase ‘May I kiss your hand?’ the sonorous kisses imprinted on our shoulders, and the smell of tallow from their heads, excited in me a feeling of disgust. Under the influence of this feeling

I kissed Natalia Savishna's cap very coldly, when she tearfully said good-bye to me.

It is strange that not only the countenances of all the bond-servants now stand before my eyes, but I can even picture each of them to myself with the minutest details; but mother's face, as she looked at that moment, has escaped my memory entirely; the reason lay, perhaps, in my having failed, during the whole time, to summon up courage enough to glance at her. It seemed to me that if I did so, her grief and mine would have burst all bounds.

I rushed into the barouche the first, and took my place at the back. As the upper part was raised I could see nothing, but some instinct revealed to me that mamma was still there.

'Should I look at her once more or not? . . . Well, for the last time!'

My inward struggle was over, and I leaned out of the barouche in the direction of the entrance, and at the same moment mamma, prompted by the same idea, approached the carriage from the opposite side, and called me by my name. Hearing her voice behind my back, I turned towards her, and so quickly that we knocked our heads against each other. She smiled sadly, and gave me a last long kiss.

It was only when we were some yards from my mother that I dared to glance at her. The blue neckerchief which covered her head waved in the wind; she was slowly going up the stairs, her head bent, and covering her face with her hands. Foka was helping her along.

Papa sat by my side in silence; as to me, I was

half choked with tears, and something oppressed my throat to such a degree that I could hardly breathe . . . On reaching the highway we saw a white handkerchief which somebody was waving from the balcony. I waved mine, and that calmed me a little. I still wept, it is true ; but the thought that my tears proved a feeling heart was a source of satisfaction and even of consolation.

After we had gone about a mile, I seated myself more comfortably and began to stare fixedly at the object nearest to me—the horse which ran on the side nearer to me . . . I looked at the piebald steed shaking its tail, and catching one leg against the other. I saw the plaited whip of the coachman cut its back, and its legs begin to move at once ; then I looked at the harness shaking on its neck, while the rings on the harness did the same, and looked on until the harness itself was covered with foam. I then began to look around : at the ripe waving rye in the fields ; at the dark fallow where a peasant with a plough and a horse with a foal beside it might be seen ; at the milestones ; even at the coach-box in order to know which of the two coachmen was going with us ; and ere my tears were dry my thoughts were far from my mother, whom I was perhaps leaving for ever. But soon some trifle would recall her again and again to my mind. I remembered the mushroom found by me in the birch-tree avenue on the eve of our departure ; how Lubotchka and Katenka both wanted to gather it, and had quarrelled about it ; then I remembered how bitterly they wept when we parted.

How sorry I was to have left them! How I regretted Natalia Savishna, the birch-alley, and poor old Foka—even ill-tempered Mimi! I missed them all, and poor dear mamma; and my eyes were again full of tears, but not for long.

CHAPTER XV.

MY CHILDHOOD—A RETROSPECT.

WHAT a truly happy time childhood is! It is a happiness which, once gone, can never return to us. Is it possible not to cherish every remembrance of it? The remembrance of my childhood refreshes and elevates my thoughts, and is the spring of all my best joys.

Often, after having run about till I was tired, I used to come to the tea-table and sit on my high chair; it is time to go to bed, I have drunk my cup of milk and sugar long ago, I am so sleepy that I can hardly keep my eyes open, but still I do not stir from my place; I sit listening to the talk around me. How can I help listening? Mother is talking, and the sound of her voice is so sweet, so kind. The sound of her voice alone speaks to my heart. I look at her face with my drowsy eyes, and all at once she seems to have become smaller, her face is not larger than a button; but I still see it as clearly as ever before me. I see her look at me and smile. I like to see her so small. I close my eyes more and more, and now she is still less; but I move, and the charm is broken. I

screw up my eyes, I change my position, trying in some way or other to renew it, but in vain.

I get up, climb up with my feet on to the chair, and lie down comfortably.

‘Thou wilt fall asleep again, Nicolinka,’ observes mamma. ‘It would be better for thee to go upstairs.’

‘I do not want to go to bed, mamma,’ I answer.

Sweet misty dreams again fill my mind, and the sound sleep of childhood soon closes my eyes. A moment more, and I am fast asleep, till someone comes to rouse me. In my sleep, I feel the touch of a kind hand ; I recognise it, and still half asleep, seize it and press it close to my lips.

All have left the room ; only one candle lights up the drawing-room. Mamma has said that she will awake me herself ; it is she who is sitting on the arm-chair on which I am sleeping, her dear kind hand smoothes my hair, and at the same time the sweet and well-known voice sounds in my ear :

‘Get up, my darling ; it is time to go to bed.’

There are no careless lookers-on to restrain her ; she does not fear to pour out all her tenderness and love upon me. I do not stir, but kiss her hand passionately.

‘Get up quick, my child.’

She puts her other arm round my neck, and her fingers move rapidly, tickling me. It is quite still, half dark in the room ; my nerves are excited by the tickling, and by being roused from sleep. Mamma sits close to me ; she touches me ; I feel her fragrant breath upon me, and hear her voice. It makes me start up, throw my arms round her neck, and pressing my head against her bosom, whisper breathlessly :

‘Oh, mother, dear mother, how I love thee!’

She smiles her sad, lovely smile, and putting both hands upon my head, kisses my forehead and lays it on her knees.

‘Thou lovest me very much, dost thou not?’ And after a momentary silence she continues: ‘Mind, thou must always love me; never forget me. When mother is no more, thou wilt not forget her? Wilt thou always remember her, Nicolinka?’

And she kisses me with renewed tenderness.

‘Cease, pray! Do not speak about that, dearest mother!’ I exclaim, kissing her knees, and tears of love and ecstasy stream down my cheeks.

After that, on coming upstairs into my room and standing in my little wadded dressing-gown before the holy image, how earnestly did I repeat the words: ‘God bless my father and mother!’ On repeating the prayer which my childish lips had first learned to lisp from my dear mother’s lips, my love for her and my love for God were strangely mingled into one feeling.

My prayer over, I wrap myself up in my little blanket, and my heart feels so easy, so light, and so comfortable. One dream follows another, but what are they? They are intangible, but full of pure love and hope in a bright future. And then I think of Karl Ivanovitch and his sad fate. He is the only unfortunate man I know, and I feel so full of pity for him that I love him, and tears fill my eyes as I say to myself: ‘God grant him happiness! Enable me to help him, and to make his sorrows easier to bear. I am ready to make any sacrifice for his sake.’

Then taking my pet toys, a china rabbit and a dog, and putting them into a corner of my bed under my pillow, I rejoice to see how comfortably they lie there. Again a prayer rises to my lips for the happiness of all, or perhaps that the weather may be fine the next day that we may go out for a walk; then turning on to the other side, my thoughts and dreams become confused, and I fall peacefully and quietly asleep, my face yet wet with tears.

Will the freshness, carelessness, love, and faith of childhood ever return to us? What better time of life can there be than that when the two highest virtues—an innocent light-heartedness and an infinite need of love—are the only impulses in life?

Where are those ardent prayers? where is that best of all gifts, the pure tears of emotion? A guardian angel came down from heaven, and with a smile wiped away those tears and charmed the innocent fancy of the child with sweet dreams.

Is it possible that life has laid such a heavy burden upon my heart all these tears and ecstasies are gone from me for ever? Is it possible that nothing but remembrance is left me?

CHAPTER XVI.

MY VERSES.

IT was about a month after our arrival in Moscow that I was sitting upstairs in my grandmother's house at a large round table, and was writing. Opposite to

me sat our drawing-master, at the same table, correcting the head of a Turk in a turban drawn in black pencil. Volodja stood with his neck stretched out behind the teacher, and looked at the painting over his shoulder. This head was Volodja's first work of the kind, and was that very day to be offered by him to grandmother as a names-day present.

'Will you not make the shade darker here?' said Volodja to the teacher, standing on tiptoe and pointing to the Turk's neck.

'No; it is not necessary,' answered the drawing-master, putting the pencils and drawing-pen into the case. 'Now it is all right, and you must not touch it any more. Well, and you, Nicolinka,' added he, rising and continuing to look askance at the Turk, 'let the cat out of the bag at last. What will you offer your grandmother to-day? A head drawn by you would be the best thing. Good-bye, gentlemen,' added he, taking up his hat, and a ticket for the number of lessons being given him, he departed.

At that moment I thought likewise that it would have been better to have prepared her a drawing than the present I was then working at. When we were told that our grandmother's names-day was drawing near, and that it was necessary for each of us to prepare her a present for that day, the idea of writing a poem on the occasion occurred to me, and I had soon found out two lines which rhymed very well, and I thought it would not be difficult to find the rest. I do not remember how it was that such a strange idea for a child came into my mind, but I do remember that I was delighted with it, and that I answered all

the questions addressed to me on the subject by saying I would certainly make a present to my grandmother, but that I would not tell anybody what it was to be.

Contrary to my expectations, however, I found that except the two first lines I had thought of at the very first, I could not write anything more in spite of all my endeavours to do so. I began to read the poems which were in our school-books, but neither Dnistrieff nor Derjavin could help me ; on the contrary, they but convinced me of my own inability. As I knew that Karl Ivanovitch was fond of copying various poems, I stealthily ransacked his papers, and amongst several pieces of German poetry I found a Russian one, which must have been the production of his own pen :

To Mrs. L——, Petrovsky, June 3, 1828.

Remember when near,
Remember when far,
Remember me.
Henceforth and for ever
Remember me,
How truly I love.

KARL MARVER.

These verses, written on thin letter-paper in nice rounded handwriting, attracted me by the touching feelings with which they were imbued. I immediately learnt them by heart, and resolved to model my own verses upon them. Then matters began to go on much more easily. On the day of grandmother's names-day, my twelve verses of congratulation were ready, and sitting at the table in our study, I was copying them out on vellum paper.

Two sheets of paper were already spoiled . . . not because I wanted to change anything in my verses, they appeared to me to be perfect ; but from the third line the ends of the lines began to run upwards more and more, so that even at a distance all could see that it was crookedly written, and good for nothing.

The third sheet was as crooked as the two first ; but I made up my mind not to copy it any more. In my verses I congratulated my grandmother, wished her many happy returns of the day, and closed with the following words :

We will try to be a comfort to you,
And we love you as we did our own mother.

The verses seemed to me very pretty, but the last line offended my ear somehow.

‘And we love you as we did our own mother,’ repeated I over and over again. What rhyme could I use instead of mother ? bother ? . . . feather ? . . . Well, never mind. My verses are better than Karl Ivanovitch’s, at all events.

And I wrote the last line. Afterwards, when I was alone in my bedroom, I read them aloud, with feeling and gesticulation. My verses were quite without rhythm or measure, but I paid no attention to that. The last line, however, struck me much more disagreeably than before. I sat down on my bed and fell into deep thought. . . .

Why did I write : *as our own mother* ? She is not here ; would it not have been better not to mention her ? It is true that I love my grandmother, I respect her ; but yet it is not the same thing . . . Why did I

put that? why did I write a lie? Supposing it be poetry, all the same it ought not to be.

At that moment the tailor came in and brought us our new jackets.

‘Well, so be it!’ said I impatiently, and angrily putting my verses under the pillow, I ran to try on the Moscow suit of clothes.

They fitted perfectly: the brown jackets with bronze buttons were made to fit closely, not like those we had worn in the country, where the clothes were always made wider for fear we should outgrow them; the dark-coloured trousers, likewise made tight, set off my muscles to advantage, and concealed my boots.

‘At last I have trousers with straps too, real straps!’ exclaimed I, examining my legs on all sides, and feeling ready to leap out of my skin for joy. Although the clothes were very tight, and I felt very uncomfortable in them, I carefully concealed the fact, and said that I was, on the contrary, very comfortable in the clothes, and if there was a defect to be found in them, it was that they were a little too wide. After this I stood for a very long time before the looking-glass brushing my plentifully pomatumed hair; but however hard I tried I could not smooth down the forelock on the top of my head; as soon as I ceased brushing it down, it would rise again and stick out on all sides, giving me a most ridiculous look.

Karl Ivanovitch was dressing himself in another room, and his blue dress-coat and white linen were carried through the study. I heard the voice of grandmother’s maid-servant outside the door, which

led downstairs. I went to ask what she wanted. A stiffly-starched shirt-front lay on her arm; she told me that it was for Karl Ivanovitch, and that she had not slept all night in order to have it ready for him. I undertook to hand it to him, and asked her: 'Is my grandmother up?'

'To be sure! She has already had her coffee, and the priest is there now. What a fine young gentleman you are!' added she, gazing with a smile at my new clothes.

Her remark made me blush. I turned round on one leg, snapped my fingers, and jumped in order to show her that she did not yet know what a very fine young man I was.

When I brought the shirt-front to Karl Ivanovitch, it was too late: he had put on another, and stooping before a little looking-glass which stood on the table, was holding the magnificent knot of his cravat in his hand, and trying if his smoothly shaved chin could be easily moved backwards and forwards behind it. After having seen that our clothes were all right, and having asked Nicolas to do the same for him, he took us to our grandmother. It makes me laugh now, when I remember how strongly our three heads smelt of pomatum, as we came downstairs.

Karl Ivanovitch had a box in his hand, made by himself; Volodja had the drawing, and I had the verses. Each had the congratulations with which he was to present his gift, ready at the tip of his tongue. Just as Karl Ivanovitch opened the drawing-room door, the priest had arrayed himself, and the first words of the *Te Deum* were heard.

My grandmother was already in the room, quite bent and resting her arms on the back of a chair, she stood near the wall, praying fervently. Papa stood near her. He turned his head towards us and smiled on observing how we hastily hid our presents behind our backs, and endeavouring to remain unnoticed, stopped close to the door by which we had entered. The whole effect of the surprise we had reckoned upon was lost.

At the end of the *Te Deum*, when all approached in order to kiss the cross, I suddenly felt myself under the heavy influence of an unconquerable, stupefying fit of bashfulness, and feeling that I should never have the courage to offer my gift, I hid myself behind Karl Ivanovitch, who, in the choicest words, congratulated grandmother, passed the box he had made from his right hand to his left, then delivered it to the queen of the day, and made way for Volodja. Grandmother looked delighted with the box with gilt edges, and thanked him with a smile. She evidently did not know, however, where to put the box, and perhaps for that very reason gave it to papa in order that he should look at it and see how skilfully it was made.

After having gratified his curiosity papa handed it to the priest, who seemed to find it very pretty ; he shook his head, looking with curiosity first at the box, then at the man who had made such a beautiful thing. Volodja presented his Turk, and also got the most flattering praise from all. My turn came. Grandmother turned her face with an encouraging smile towards me.

Those who have experienced what it is to be bashful, know that the feeling increases in direct reference to time, and that decision decreases in the inverse one, *i.e.*, the more this state of mind continues, the more irresistible it becomes and the less decided one becomes.

The last drop of boldness and decision left me when Karl Ivanovitch and Volodja were handing their gifts, and my bashfulness reached its climax. I felt the blood rush from my heart to my head. I turned from pale to red, and large drops of perspiration stood on my forehead and my nose. My ears burned; I felt my whole body shivering and perspiring. I stood first on one leg, then on the other, but did not move.

‘Well, Nicolinka, show us what you have. Is it a box or a drawing?’ asked papa.

There was nothing to be done. With a trembling hand I presented the fatal roll; my voice refused to obey me, and I stood before my grandmother in silence. I was quite bewildered by the thought that instead of the drawing she expected, my good-for-nothing verses would be read aloud, and the words, ‘as our own mother,’ too, which would clearly prove that I had never loved her and had forgotten her. How shall I describe my sufferings when grandmother began to read my poem aloud, and when, unable to decipher it, she stopped in the middle of a line in order to glance at papa with a smile, which seemed full of raillery, or when she did not pronounce a word as I wished it to be pronounced, or when, without finishing the poem on account of the weakness of her

sight, she handed it to papa, asking him to read it over again from beginning to end. It seemed to me that she did so, because she was tired of reading such bad verses and so unevenly written, and with the intention likewise of letting papa himself read the last line, which so clearly proved my want of feeling. I expected him to rap me on the nose with the verses, and to say: 'You bad boy, you are not to forget your mamma. . . .'

But nothing of the kind happened; on the contrary, when all was read, my grandmother said; 'Charmant,' and kissed my forehead.

The box, the drawing, and the verses were put, together with two lawn handkerchiefs and the snuff-box with mamma's portrait, on the table of the easy armchair in which my grandmother usually sat.

'The Princess Barbara Iliinitchna,' announced one of the two enormous footmen.

My grandmother was looking pensively at the portrait set in the tortoise snuff-box, and did not answer.

'Are you at home, your excellency?' repeated the footman.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PRINCESS KORNAKOFF.

'AT home,' answered grandmother, seating herself more comfortably in the armchair.

The princess was about forty-five, short in stature, a weak-looking, dry, bilious woman with disagreeable

gray-green eyes, whose look entirely belied the unnaturally amiable expression which sat on her lips. Fair carrotty hair was seen from under her velvet bonnet, trimmed with an ostrich feather. Her eyebrows and eyelashes seemed to be still fairer and still more carrotty, thanks to her sickly complexion. But notwithstanding all that, her unconstrained manners, her very small hands and the peculiar dryness of all her features, gave her a stamp of nobility and energy.

The princess was a great talker, and by her talkativeness belonged to the category of people who usually speak just as if somebody were contradicting them, even when not a word was said. She would either raise or lower her voice by turns, then suddenly begin to speak eagerly, glancing at all present, even if they took no part in the conversation, as if she hoped to invigorate herself by doing so.

In spite of the fact that the princess had kissed grandmother's hand and continually called her *ma bonne tante*, I observed that grandmother was displeased with her; she raised her eyebrows in a way peculiar to her while listening to her story about the reason why Prince Michael had been unable to come himself to congratulate grandmother, although he had longed to do so; and in answer to the French speech of the princess, she said in Russian in a drawling tone:

'I am very thankful to you, my dear, for your amiable politeness—pray do not say anything about Prince Michael's not having come . . . he is always busy; and besides, what pleasure can it give him to sit with an infirm old woman?' And without giving

the princess time to refute her words, she continued :
' How are your children, my dear ?'

' Thank God, ma tante, they are growing, learning, and frolicking . . . especially Stephen, my eldest boy ; he is growing such a scapegrace that it is quite impossible to manage him ; but he is clever—un garçon qui fromet.* Imagine, mon cousin,' she continued, addressing herself especially to my father, because my grandmother, who cared very little about the princess's children, and wished to boast of her grandsons, had taken my verses out of the box and was beginning to unfold the paper—' imagine, mon cousin, what he did the other day . . .'

And the princess, bending her head towards papa, began to tell him some story in a very animated way. When she had finished the story—I did not hear what it was about—she laughed, and, looking inquiringly into papa's face, said :

' What a naughty boy he is, mon cousin, is not he ? He deserved to be whipped ; but the trick was so clever and amusing that I pardoned him, mon cousin.'

And the princess, fixing her eyes on my grandmother, sat quite silent, with a smile on her lips.

' Do you *beat* your children, my dear ?' asked grandmother, raising her eyebrows significantly and laying great stress on the word *beat*.

' Ah ! ma bonne tante,' answered the princess sweetly, and glancing at papa, ' I know what your opinion is upon the subject ; but allow me to disagree with you. I have thought about it deeply ; I have read many

* A fellow who promises much.

books on the subject, have consulted many persons, and my experience has made me come to the conclusion that it is necessary to govern children by fear. To make a child manageable it is necessary that he should fear you, is it not, mon cousin? and what, je vous demande un peu,* do children fear more than the rod?’

And with these words she threw an inquiring glance at us. I confess that I felt rather uncomfortable at the moment.

‘You may say what you like, but a boy is a baby till his twelfth or even his seventeenth year; it is different with a girl, of course.’

‘How lucky it is that I am not her son,’ thought I.

‘Yes, it is all very fine, my dear,’ said grandmother, folding up my verses and putting them under the box again, as if, after all, she did not consider the princess worthy to hear such a fine thing; ‘it is all very fine, but tell me, pray, what delicacy can you expect to find in your children after that?’ And considering the argument unanswerable, grandmother added, in order to put an end to the conversation: ‘Well, each can abide by his own way of thinking.’

The princess was silent, and only smiled condescendingly, as if she could excuse such strange prejudices in a person whom she esteemed so highly.

‘Oh! pray introduce me to your young gentlemen,’ said she, looking at us and smiling pleasantly.

We rose and stared into the princess’s face without knowing what we were to do in order to make her acquaintance.

* ‘I ask you.’

‘Kiss the princess’s hand,’ said papa.

‘I ask you to love your old aunt,’ said she, kissing Volodja’s head. ‘I am but a distant relation of yours, but I consider friendly relations more than relationship,’ added she, especially addressing grandmother ; but grandmother continued to be displeased, and answered :

‘Eh, my dear, does anybody think anything of such a relationship as ours, nowadays?’

‘This one will be a young man of the world,’ said papa, pointing to Volodja ; ‘and this one is a poet,’ added he, as I kissed the small dry hand of the princess, at the same time clearly picturing to myself the very same hand holding a rod, under the rod a bench, etc., etc.

‘Which one?’ asked the princess, still holding my hand.

‘This little one with his hair sticking up,’ answered papa, smiling gaily.

‘What has he to do with my hair . . . are there no other topics of conversation?’ thought I, and went to a distant corner.

I had a very strange idea about beauty—I even thought Karl Ivanovitch one of the handsomest men in the world ; but I knew very well that I was ugly, and that was just why every allusion to my face wounded my feelings.

I remember very well, that one day, at dinner—I was then about six years old—the conversation turned upon my looks, and mamma tried to find something nice in my face ; she said that I looked clever, and had a pleasant smile ; but yielding at last to my

father's arguments, and to the evidence of her own eyes, she was obliged to confess that I was ugly ; and afterwards, when I approached her to thank her for dinner, she tapped my cheek, and said :

' Remember, Nicolinka, that nobody will love thee for thy face ; therefore thou must endeavour to be a good and clever boy.'

These words persuaded me not only that I was not handsome, but made me resolve to be a clever and good boy, by all means.

I was often under the influence of despair. I fancied that there could be no happiness in the world for a man with such a large nose, such thick lips and small gray eyes as I had ; I prayed for some miracle that would transform me into a handsome man, and was ready to sacrifice all I had then, and all I was to possess in the future, in order to have a handsome face.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PRINCE IVAN IVANOVITCH.

AS soon as the princess had listened to my verses and loaded the author with praise, grandmother softened, began to speak French to her, ceased to say 'you' to her, or to call her 'my dear,' and asked her to come with all her children to spend the evening at her house ; the princess consented, and after staying a little longer, she went away.

So many visitors came that day, that carriages did not cease to stop in the yard before our house during the whole morning.

'*Bonjour, chère cousine,*' said one of the guests, entering the room and kissing grandmother's hand.

He was a tall man of seventy, in a military uniform, with large epaulets, and from under his collar hung a large white cross ; he had calm features, and an open frank look. The freedom and simplicity of his manners struck me. Though but half a circle of his hair was left on his head, and the position of his upper lip clearly proved that many teeth were wanting, his face was remarkably handsome.

Towards the end of the last century Prince Ivan Ivanovitch, while yet a young man, had a brilliant career, thanks to his noble disposition, his good looks, his remarkable courage, his illustrious and powerful connections, and especially, perhaps, thanks to his having been born under a lucky star. He did not leave the military service, and it soon happened that his ambitions were so fully gratified that he had nothing left to wish for. From his early youth he had displayed such tact, that it seemed as if he were already prepared to fill the exalted post afterwards granted him by fate ; thus, though in the course of his brilliant and somewhat vain life he did not fail to meet with failures, disappointments, and afflictions, like other men, his calm disposition, his elevated mind, his moral and religious principles had never once failed him, and he had gained the esteem of all, less by his brilliant position than by his conscientious and firm disposition. He was not very witty, but thanks to the position he held, which enabled him to observe with indifference all the vanities of this life, he had a noble mind. He was kind and sensible, but

cold and somewhat arrogant in his manners. This sprang from the fact that being placed in a position in which he could be very useful to others, he endeavoured by his coldness to protect himself from the continual requests and entreaties of those who only wished to profit by his influence. His coldness was softened, however, by the condescending politeness of a well-bred man of the world. He was a well-educated and well-read man ; but his education had stopped at that which he had acquired in his youth, at the end of the last century. He had read all that was written in the eighteenth century in France, and was considered worthy of being read, either in philosophy or in the writings of eloquent men ; he knew well all the best works of French literature, and liked to quote Racine, Corneille, Boileau, Molière, Montaigne, Fénelon ; he knew mythology remarkably well, and had studied the ancient masterpieces of epic poetry in a French translation ; he had sufficient knowledge of history, taken by him from Segur ; but he had no idea either of mathematics, or of physics, or contemporary literature. He knew perfectly well how to make commonplace remarks on Goethe, Schiller, or Byron, whose works he had never read. Notwithstanding this French classical education, specimens of which are now very rarely found, his conversation was simple, and that very simplicity concealed his ignorance, and at the same time showed his good breeding and tolerance. He was a foe to eccentricity of every kind, saying that it was but a trick common to vulgar people. Society was absolutely necessary for him wherever he was. Both

in Moscow and abroad, his way of living was the same, and on certain days he entertained the whole town at his home. He was so highly considered in the town, that his note of invitation could serve as a passport for entrance into any drawing-room, that many young and pretty ladies turned their red-coloured cheeks for him to kiss them, which he did with a sort of parental feeling, and that many, who seemed both rich and gentlemanly, were delighted when they were admitted to the prince's parties.

There were very few left for the prince of those who, like our grandmother, were of the same circle, the same education, the same outlook upon things, and the same age as he was, therefore he particularly valued his old friendship with her, and always showed the greatest esteem for her.

I could not help admiring the prince : the respect paid him by all around him, his large epaulets, the joy expressed by my grandmother on seeing him, the fact that he was the only one who did not seem to fear her, and addressed her quite freely, and even had the boldness to call her *ma cousine*, filled me with a respect equal to that I felt for my grandmother. When my verses were shown him he called me up to him, and said : 'Who knows, ma cousine, he will perhaps be a second Derjavin.'

With these words he pinched my cheek so hard, that if I had not guessed that it was meant as a joke, I should have screamed with pain.

The visitors were gone, my father and Volodja had left the room ; the prince, my grandmother and I were alone in the drawing-room.

‘How is it our dear Natalia Nicolaevna has not come to see you to-day?’ asked Prince Ivan Ivanovitch, after a few minutes’ silence.

‘Ah! mon cher,’ answered grandmother, lowering her voice, and laying her hand on the sleeve of his uniform; ‘she would certainly have come if she were free to act as she pleases. She writes to me that Pierre proposed to her to come, but that she refused because the income had been less this year, and she adds: “Besides, there is no necessity for all of us to come to Moscow at present. Lubotchka is too young; as to the boys, they will live at your house, and I shall be much easier about them than if they were to live with me.” That is all very fine,’ continued grandmother in a tone which showed clearly that she did not find it very fine at all; ‘it is high time to send the boys here that they may learn something and get accustomed to life. What sort of education could they get in the country? . . . the eldest will be thirteen soon, the other eleven. Did you observe, mon cousin, they are just like savages? . . . they have no idea how to come into a room?’

‘I cannot understand, however,’ answered the prince, ‘why there are always the same complaints of their affairs being in disorder. Their father has a large fortune. As to Natalia’s Habarovka, where we used to perform at private theatricals together, I know it well; it is a splendid estate, and it must always bring in a good income.’

‘I will tell you, as you are an intimate friend,’ interrupted grandmother, with a look of sadness on her face. ‘It seems to me that these are but excuses;

our friend wants to live here alone; he wants to lounge about all day at the club, and go to dinner-parties and other places, and his wife does not suspect it. You know what an angel she is—she believes him. He has persuaded her that it is time to take the children to Moscow, that she had better remain with the foolish governess in the country. She would believe him if he were to tell her that it was necessary to whip her children as the Princess Barbara Iliinitchna whips hers. And it seems to me that she would consent, too,' said grandmother, turning in her arm-chair, with a look of great contempt. 'Yes, my friend,' continued grandmother, after a few minutes' silence, taking one of her two handkerchiefs into her hand to dry the tears which flowed down her cheeks, 'I often think he can neither appreciate nor understand her, and that notwithstanding her kindness, her love for him, and her endeavours to conceal her grief, she cannot be happy with him; remember my words, if he do not——' My grandmother covered her face with her handkerchief.

'Eh, ma bonne amie,' answered the prince in a reproachful tone, 'I see you are as unreasonable as you were before; you are always distressing yourself and crying about some imaginary sorrow. Fie, for shame! I have known him very long, and I do know him to be an attentive, kind, and excellent husband; and, what is a very important point, he is a real gentleman, un parfait honnête homme.'

Having involuntarily overheard a conversation which I ought not to have heard, I left the room on tiptoe in the greatest excitement.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE IVINS.

'VOLODJA ! Volodja ! the Ivins are coming !' cried I, having seen through the window three boys in blue winter-coats with sea-otter collars, who, with their foppish young tutor, were crossing the road towards our house.

The Ivins were relations of ours, and were almost of the same age ; soon after we came to Moscow we made acquaintance with them, and even became intimate friends.

The second son, Serge Ivin, was a swarthy boy, with curly hair, a snub-nose, very fresh red lips, which rarely closed over his white and rather prominent upper teeth, fine dark-blue eyes, and a peculiarly energetic expression. He never smiled, but always either looked very serious or laughed outright a loud and very catching laugh. His unusual beauty struck me from the very first moment of our greeting. I felt strongly attracted towards him. To see him was enough to make me feel quite happy ; and at that time all my soul was in that one wish. If it happened that I did not see him for three or four days, I began to feel dull, and ready to shed tears ; all my dreams by day or night were about him. On going to bed I longed to dream of him ; on closing my eyes I saw him before me, and cherished the vision as my best happiness. I would not speak to anybody of the feeling, I felt it too precious to be

talked about. Perhaps he was tired of finding me staring at him with my restless eyes, or he simply felt no sympathy for me, but he evidently preferred to play and talk with Volodja ; but I was satisfied, and wanted nothing, required nothing of him, and was ready to sacrifice all for his sake. Besides the passionate attraction inspired by him, his presence roused another feeling in the depths of my soul—the fear of distressing, offending, or displeasing him. It was, perhaps, because his face had a haughty expression, or because, disliking my own personal appearance, I valued beauty too highly in others ; or, as is more probable, because fear invariably accompanies love, and I felt fear and love for him in an equal degree. At first when Sereja began to talk to me I felt so bewildered by the unexpected happiness, that I turned first red, then pale, and could not answer him. He had a bad habit, when he was sunk in thought, of staring fixedly at some object, winking with his eyes, twitching his nose and his eyebrows. All agreed that the habit was an ugly one, but I considered it so nice that I involuntarily got into the habit of doing so too. A few days after our first acquaintance grandmother asked me if my eyes ached, that I was winking like an owl. Not one word of love was ever uttered between us ; but he knew his power over me, and unconsciously, but tyrannically, used it in our childish games. As for me, I was too afraid of him to be able to speak plainly, although I wished very much to show him all that lay hidden in my heart. I feigned indifference towards him, and yet submitted to him without a murmur. Sometimes

his influence over me seemed to oppress me, but I could not cast it off.

It grieves me to remember this fresh and pure feeling of disinterested and infinite love, which died without a word of it having been breathed, and without having called forth any feeling in return.

Why was it that when I was a child I tried hard to be like a grown-up man, and as soon as I ceased to be a child I often longed to be like one? How often did it happen that in my relations with Sereja the desire not to be like a child stopped me from betraying my feelings, and made me hypocritical! Not only did I never dare kiss him, as I often longed to do, or take his hand, or tell him that I was very glad to see him, but I never even dared call him by his diminutive name 'Sereja,' but always 'Sergius.' Every expression of feeling was looked upon as babyishness, and he who did express any was still looked upon as a *child*. Without having passed through the bitter trials which make grown people become cautious and cold in their relations towards others, we deprived ourselves of these pure enjoyments of kindly childish attachment on account of our strange desire to imitate grown-up people.

It was in the entrance-hall that I met the Ivins, welcomed them, and hastened to my grandmother. I announced their arrival to her with as much delight as if the news were sufficient to make her perfectly happy. Still staring at Sereja I went after him into the drawing-room, following his least motion with my eyes. When grandmother said that he had grown, and looked at him with her piercing eyes, I felt both

fear and hope, just as an artist might feel, waiting for a decision upon his work from some esteemed judge.

The young Ivins' tutor, Herr Frost, went, with my grandmother's leave, into our garden, sat down on a green bench, crossed his legs picturesquely, putting his cane with a bronze head between them, and, with the look of a man who is very well pleased with himself, lighted his cigar.

Herr Frost was a German, but quite a different sort of man from our kind Karl Ivanovitch. In the first place, he knew the Russian language very well, and spoke it quite correctly. He knew French, too, but had a very bad pronunciation, and generally enjoyed, particularly amongst ladies, the reputation of a very learned man. In the second place, he had reddish whiskers, a large ruby pin stuck in a black satin scarf, the ends of which were passed through his braces, his trousers were checked sky-blue. In the third place, he was young and good-looking, had a self-satisfied look, and very fine muscular legs. It was evident that he was particularly proud of the latter, and considered them as irresistible for every person of the female sex; perhaps that was the reason why he endeavoured to exhibit them as much as possible, and, whether standing or sitting, always moved the calves of his legs. His was the type of a young German born in Russia, who was desirous to look fine, and to be considered a dandy.

We were very merry in the garden. Our game at 'robbers' went on as well as possible; but one circumstance had almost put a stop to it. Sereja was a robber; while pursuing the travellers he stumbled,

and with all his might struck his knee against a tree so violently, that I thought he would be dashed to pieces. Though I was the 'gendarme' of the play, and my duty, therefore, was to catch him, I approached him, and began to ask him with great interest if he were hurt. Sereja grew angry, clenched his fists, stamped his foot, and cried out in a tone which clearly proved that he was badly hurt.

'Well, what of that? in that case we cannot play at any game. Well, why do you not catch me?' repeated he over and over again, glancing askance at Volodja and the elder Ivin, who, representing the travellers, were running and jumping along the road, and suddenly uttering a piercing scream, and bursting out laughing, he pursued them.

I cannot tell how greatly his heroism struck and delighted me; notwithstanding the dreadful pain which he evidently suffered, he did not allow the game to flag even for a moment.

Not long after that, Iliinka Grap joined us, and we went upstairs to play till dinner-time: Sereja again delighted me by his astonishing courage, and his strength of mind impressed me greatly.

Iliinka Grap was the son of a poor foreigner, who had formerly lived at my grandfather's house, was indebted to him for some kind office or other, and now considered it his bounden duty to send his son very often to our house. If he thought that our acquaintance would give his son honour and pleasure, he was greatly mistaken, because we were not only on bad terms with Iliinka, but we only noticed him when we wanted to sneer at him. Iliinka Grap was a boy

of thirteen, very thin and very tall, with a bird's face, and with a good-natured, submissive look. He was very poorly dressed, but his head was always so abundantly greased with pomatum that we asserted that on a sunshiny day the pomatum thawed on Grap's head and streamed down his jacket. When I now think of him I remember him to have been a very obliging, peaceable, and kind-hearted boy ; but then he seemed such a vile being to me, that I found it perfectly useless to pity him, or even to think about him.

When our game at robbers was over, we went upstairs and began to shout and to boast of each other's feats of gymnastics. Iliinka looked at us with a shy, wondering smile, and when we proposed to him to try in his turn, he refused, saying that he was not strong enough. Sereja looked very nice ; he had taken his jacket off, his face was burning, his eyes bright ; he laughed continually, or invented new games, jumped over three chairs put abreast, rolled like a wheel across the whole room, stood on his head on Tatischeff's dictionaries, placed by him like a pedestal in the middle of the room, and made such funny tricks with his feet, that we could not help laughing. After the last trick he became very sedate ; then winking at us, he suddenly approached Iliinka, and with a serious look said to him :

'Please try this ; I assure you it is not difficult.'

Grap, observing that the general attention was turned towards him, grew red, and in a voice that was almost inaudible, said that he could not.

'Well, but why will he not show us some trick

too? He is just like a girl . . . he must absolutely stand on his head.'

And Sereja took his hand.

'Of course! of course!' we all cried out, crowding round Iliinka, who was evidently frightened, and had grown quite pale; then taking his hand we dragged him towards the place where all the dictionaries were lying.

'Let me free; I will do it myself! You will tear my jacket to pieces!' cried the unhappy victim. But his cries of despair only excited us still more; we burst into a roar of laughter; the green jacket cracked along all the seams.

Volodja and the eldest Ivin pushed his head down and placed it on the dictionaries; I and Sereja seized the poor little boy by his thin legs, while he was kicking with all his might. We twisted his trousers up to his knees, and with a loud scream raised his legs high up in the air, while Ivin the younger tried to balance the whole body.

It came to pass that after our noisy laughter we suddenly grew quite silent, and it became so still in the room, that only the heavy breathing of the unhappy Grap was heard. I was not quite sure at that moment whether it was all indeed very laughable and funny.

'There, now you are a brave fellow!' said Sereja, smacking his hand.

Iliinka was silent, and endeavouring to get free he moved his legs right and left. In one of these hopeless exertions he struck Sereja's eye so forcibly with his heel, that Sereja at once set his legs free, put his

hand to his eye, whence tears were streaming from the blow, and pushed Iliinka with all his strength. Iliinka, no longer upheld by any of us, fell heavily on to the ground, and could hardly speak on account of his sobbing.

‘Why do you persecute me so?’

‘The miserable appearance of poor Iliinka, with his face drowned in tears, his dishevelled hair, twisted up trousers, from which his unclean boots peeped, struck us; we all stood still and laughed constrainedly.

It was Sereja who recovered the first.

‘Quite a woman—a cry-baby,’ said he, touching him lightly with his foot; ‘it is quite impossible to joke with him . . . Well, that will do; stand up.’

‘I tell you that you are a nasty boy,’ said Iliinka crossly, and turning aside, began to sob aloud.

‘Ah, well! it is not enough that you have struck me with the heel of your boot, you want to abuse me now,’ cried Sereja, seizing a dictionary in his hands and hurling it at the head of the unhappy boy, who did not think of defending himself, but only hid his face in his hands.

‘There’s for you! . . . Let us leave him alone; he cannot take a joke . . . let us go downstairs,’ said Sereja, with a forced smile.

I looked with great interest at the poor little fellow, who, lying on the floor and hiding his face in the dictionaries, was weeping so bitterly, that it seemed to me that a little more and he would have died of the convulsions which shook his whole body.

‘Oh, Sergius!’ asked I, ‘why did you do that?’

‘A nice question! . . . I did not cry when I smashed my leg to-day almost to the bone.’

‘Yes, that is true,’ thought I. ‘Iliinka is but a cry-baby, while Sereja is a brave boy . . . how brave he is!’

I did not consider that the poor boy had not cried so much from physical pain as from the idea that five boys, whom he may have liked, had insisted on hating and persecuting him.

I really cannot explain my cruel behaviour to myself. How was it that I did not approach him, did not defend and comfort him? Where was the compassionate feeling which had formerly made me sob at the sight of a young raven thrown out of its nest, or of a little dog which was to be thrown over a hedge, or of a hen caught by the cook in order to be roasted for dinner?

Is it possible that all those good feelings were choked in me by my love for Sereja, and by my wish to appear before his eyes as brave as he was himself? Both my love for him and my desire to seem a brave fellow must not have been worth much! They have left the only dark blots that lie on the pages of my childhood.

CHAPTER XX.

THE ARRIVAL OF VISITORS.

JUDGING by the great bustle noticeable in the butler’s room, the bright lights, which gave a new and festive appearance to all the things so familiar to me

in the drawing-room and saloon, and especially by the fact that Prince Ivan Ivanovitch had sent his musical band to our house, it was evident that there was to be a large party that evening.

At the rattling of each carriage which passed before our house, I ran up to the window, put the palms of my hands to my temples, and to the glass-pane, and looked with restless curiosity into the street. Through the darkness which at first hid all objects from my sight, I at last began to distinguish the well-known shop opposite, with a lantern near it, and a large house with two brightly-lighted windows on the ground-floor on one side ; in the middle of the street I saw a *vanka*,* with two men driving in it, then an empty open carriage returning home at a foot-pace ; but now a coach approached our door, and feeling quite sure that the Ivins had come, for they had promised to come early, I ran to meet them in the antechamber. Instead of the Ivins, two ladies appeared behind a servant in livery, who was opening the door : one was tall, in a blue cloak with a sable collar ; the other much shorter, and wrapped up in a green shawl, out of which peeped her little feet in fur boots. Without paying any attention to me, although I thought it my duty to make them a bow, the short lady silently approached the tall one and stopped before her. The latter unwound the shawl in which her whole head was hidden, unbuttoned her mantle, and when the livery servant had taken charge of all these things, and had taken off her fur boots, the carefully wrapped-up person turned out to be a pretty girl of about

* A cab.

twelve, in a short open dress of book-muslin, in white pantaloons, and little black shoes. She had a black velvet ribbon on her snow-white neck ; her head was covered with dark curls, which suited her pretty face and her uncovered shoulders so well that nobody, not even Karl Ivanovitch himself, would have believed that the reason they curled so well was that they had lain from early morning in curl-papers made out of the *Moscow News*, and that they had been crisped by hot irons. She seemed to have been born with such curly hair.

The most striking feature in her was the extraordinary size of her eyes, which were always half closed, and contrasted prettily with her very small mouth. Her lips were closed, and her eyes looked so serious that the whole expression of her face was one of those on which no one ever expects to see a smile, and which, for that very reason, makes the smile still more attractive when it does come.

I endeavoured to slip into the saloon without being seen, and began to walk up and down, pretending to be in deep thought, and quite to ignore the arrival of our guests. When they reached the middle of the saloon I pretended to start, bowed, and told them that my grandmother was in the drawing-room. Mrs. Valahoff, whose face I particularly admired on account of its being so very like that of her daughter Sonitchka, nodded pleasantly.

It seemed that my grandmother was very glad to see Sonitchka ; she asked her to come nearer, set one of her locks, which hung on her forehead, to rights, and looking fixedly at her, said : ‘ *Quelle charmante*

enfant!' Sonitchka smiled, blushed, and looked so pretty that I blushed too, as I looked at her.

'I hope you will not be dull here, my dear,' said grandmother, raising Sonitchka's pretty face by putting her hand under her chin. 'Pray enjoy yourself, and dance as much as possible. So we have one lady and two gentlemen to dance already,' added she, addressing Mrs. Valahoff, and touching me with her hand.

Her mentioning us thus together was so pleasant that I grew red again.

Feeling that my shyness was increasing, and hearing the sound of carriage wheels, I considered it necessary to leave them. In the antechamber I found Princess Kornakoff with her son and several daughters. The girls were all very like each other, and being all as ugly as the princess herself, did not attract anybody's attention. Taking their mantles and boas off, and shrilly talking all together, they were bustling about and laughing at something, perhaps at their being so numerous. Stephen was a boy of fifteen, tall, muscular, with a lean face, sunken eyes with dark shades under them, and with arms and legs enormous for his age. He was clumsy, his voice had an unpleasant and harsh tone, but he seemed to be very well satisfied with himself; and according to my opinion he was just such a boy as one would expect to see, when one knew that he was whipped whenever he was naughty.

We stood looking at each other in silence for some time; then, drawing nearer, we seemed about to kiss

one another, but looking once more into each other's eyes, we changed our minds, without knowing why. When the dresses of all his sisters had rustled past, I asked him, in order to begin a conversation, if they had not been very crowded in the coach.

'I do not know,' answered he negligently. 'I never drive in a coach, because it makes me feel sick; my mother knows it. When we go anywhere in the evening I always take my seat on the coach-box; it is much jollier: you can see everything. Philip sometimes lets me drive, and even gives the whip into my hands. So you know the passers-by catch it sometimes . . .' added he, with an expressive gesture; 'what fun that is!'

'Your excellency, Philip begs to know where you were pleased to put the whip,' said the servant, entering the antechamber.

'Where I put it? I gave it to him.'

'He says you did not.'

'Well, then, I hung it up on the lantern.'

'Philip says there is no whip on the lantern; you had better say that you have lost it, and Philip will have to pay for it out of his own money,' continued the angry servant, getting more and more excited.

The lackey seemed a respectable and morose man; he evidently sided with Philip, and was determined to get to the bottom of the affair. With an involuntary feeling of delicacy I walked aside as if I had not heard anything; but the lackeys who were present acted otherwise: they drew near and looked approvingly at the old servant.

'Well, if I have lost it, what of that?' said Stephen,

evading farther explanations ; ' I will pay what the whip costs. What fun ! ' added he, approaching and dragging me into the drawing-room.

' Stop, please, master ! how will you pay ? I know the way you pay : it is now the eighth month that you promised to pay fourpence to Maria Vassilievna, and I have been waiting two years for you to pay me what you owe me ; as to Peter . . . '

' Silence ! ' cried the young prince, turning pale with rage ; ' I will tell.'

' I'll tell ! I'll tell ! ' repeated the lackey. ' You are quite wrong, your excellency ! ' added he in a very expressive tone, as we entered the saloon, and he carried the mantles towards the clothes-pin.

' That's right,' said an approving voice in the antechamber.

My grandmother had a way of expressing her opinion of people only by substituting with a peculiar intonation in her voice the pronoun ' thou ' for the pronoun ' you ' ; she used ' you ' and ' thou ' quite contrary to the usual way of doing so, and the words acquired a very different meaning when they fell from her lips. When the young prince approached her she said a few words to him, saying ' you ' to him, and looking at him with such disdain that had I been in his place I should have been quite confused. But Stephen was not, it appeared, the same kind of boy as I was. He not only paid no attention to the way grandmother treated him, but even hardly noticed grandmother herself ; he bowed to the whole company, not very gracefully, it is true, but looking quite at his ease. Sonitchka took up all my attention : I

remember that when Volodja, Stephen and I were talking in any part of the room, whence I could see Sonitchka, and she could see us and hear our conversation, I talked with pleasure; when I happened to say anything I thought funny or manly, I said it louder, turning my head towards the drawing-room; but when we came to any place whence it was impossible for those in the drawing-room either to observe or to hear us, I became silent, and did not take any pleasure in the conversation.

By degrees, the drawing-room and the saloon became quite full. Amongst the guests, as it often happens at a children's ball, there were some quite grown-up people, who did not wish to lose a chance of enjoying themselves, and danced, too, under the pretext of pleasing the mistress of the house.

When the Ivins came, instead of the joy I usually felt at meeting with Sereja, I was strangely vexed at the idea that he would see Sonitchka, and she would see him.

CHAPTER XXI.

BEFORE THE MAZURKA.

'I SEE you are going to dance,' said Sereja, leaving the drawing-room and getting a new pair of fine leather gloves out of his pocket. 'I must put my gloves on.'

'Oh dear! we have no gloves,' thought I; 'I must go upstairs and try to find some.'

But although I turned all the chests of drawers

topsy-turvy, I found only the green mittens we had worn when travelling, and one leather glove, which was of no use. In the first place, it was very old and dreadfully dirty; in the second, it was too large for me; but the chief obstacle was that the middle finger was missing, having been most likely cut off long ago by Karl Ivanovitch when he had a sore finger. However, I put this fragment of glove on my hand and stared at that part of my middle finger which always bore traces of ink.

‘If Natalia Savishna were here, she would doubtless have found a pair of gloves. It is quite impossible to go down without gloves, because if they ask me the reason why I do not dance, what am I to say? To remain here is impossible, too, because they will wonder where I am. What shall I do?’ said I to myself, swinging my arms backwards and forwards.

‘What art thou doing here?’ asked Volodja, running into the room. ‘Go down quick, and invite a lady to dance . . . the ball is beginning.’

‘Volodja,’ answered I, in a voice which showed that I was almost in despair, holding up my hand with two fingers stuck into a dirty glove—‘Volodja, you have quite forgotten.’

‘What is the matter?’ said he impatiently. ‘Ah! thou meanest gloves,’ added he carelessly, ‘that is true, we have none; we must ask grandmother . . . what she thinks about it;’ and without hesitation he ran downstairs.

His coolness about a matter which seemed to me so very important made me feel calmer too, and I hastened to the drawing-room, having quite forgotten

all about the disfigured glove, which was still on my left hand.

Cautiously approaching the armchair where grandmother sat, and lightly touching her mantle, I whispered :

‘Dear grandmother, what are we to do? we have no gloves!’

‘I beg pardon, my dear?’

‘We have no gloves,’ repeated I, drawing nearer to her, and putting both hands on the arm of her chair.

‘And how dost thou call this?’ said she, seizing my left hand. ‘Voyez, ma chère,’ continued she, addressing Mrs. Valahoff, ‘voyez comme ce jeune homme s’est fait élégant pour danser avec votre fille.’*

Grandmother held my hand firmly in hers, and glanced seriously and inquiringly at all present, till the curiosity of the whole company was satisfied, and the laugh had become general.

I should have been very sorry if Sereja had seen me at the moment, when with a wry face I tried to draw my hand away; but before Sonitchka, who laughed so heartily that her eyes were full of tears, and her curly hair fell over her pretty blushing face, I did not feel ashamed in the least. I saw that her laughter was too hearty and natural to be sarcastic; on the contrary, the fact that we were laughing together thus, facing one another, seemed to draw us nearer to each other. Although the glove episode might have had a bad termination for me, it turned

* ‘Look how fine this young gentleman has made himself, in order to dance with your daughter.’

out to be a very good thing for me, for it put me at my ease with the circle in the drawing-room—the circle which had always seemed so awful to me—and I did not feel shy at all when I entered the saloon.

The sufferings of the bashful come from their not being sure of the opinion which others may have of them ; as soon as the opinion is clearly expressed, be it bad or good, the suffering ends.

How gracefully Sonitchka Valahoff was dancing a French quadrille with the awkward young prince, my *vis-à-vis* ! How sweetly she smiled, when in dancing the *chaîne* she gave me her pretty hand ! How delightfully her dark curly hair waved over her head ! how prettily she made the *jeté-ensemble* with her little feet ! In the fifth figure, when my partner left me to pass to the other side, and when I, keeping time to the music, was just going to begin the solo, Sonitchka gravely closed her lips and moved her head aside, looking in another direction. She need not have feared for me. I did the *chassé en avant*, *chassé en arrière et glissade* very boldly, and at the moment I approached her playfully showed her my hand in the glove with two fingers sticking out. She burst out laughing and tripped still more gracefully along the inlaid floor. I remember, too, how, while we were dancing the round, and I held her hand in mine, she inclined her head, and scratched her nose with her gloved hand, without taking it out of mine. All these pictures are still fresh before my eyes, and I can even fancy I still hear the tune of the quadrille entitled 'The Girl of the Danube.'

The second quadrille began, and I danced it with Sonitchka. Having taken a seat by her side, I felt extremely awkward, and positively did not know what to say to her. When my silence became too long, I began to fear that she might consider me a fool, and resolved, come what might, to disabuse her on that point. 'Vous êtes une habitante de Moscou?' I asked, and after receiving a reply in the affirmative, continued: 'Et moi je n'ai encore jamais fréquenté la capitale,' reckoning particularly upon the effect which was to be produced by the word 'fréquenté.' I felt that I had begun the conversation very brilliantly, and had shown my knowledge of the French language; but I felt, too, that I was unable to continue the conversation in the same style. I observed that our turn to dance was not to come soon, and the silence began anew; I looked anxiously at her, wishing to know what impression I had made upon her, and waiting for her to help me. 'Where did you find such a funny glove?' asked she suddenly; and this question made me feel quite happy again, and put me at my ease. I explained that the glove belonged to Karl Ivanovitch, and talked rather ironically about Karl Ivanovitch himself, telling her how funny he looked when he took his red cap off, about the accident which had happened to him when he fell from his horse straight into a pool; that he had a green coat on then, and so on. The time during the quadrille passed imperceptibly. It was all very pleasant; but why had I turned Karl Ivanovitch into ridicule? Would I have fallen in Sonitchka's good opinion if I had talked of him with the love and esteem which I felt for him?

When the quadrille was over, Sonitchka said 'Merci' to me in such a pretty manner, just as if I had really done something worthy of her thanks. I was in ecstasies ; I could not keep silence for joy, and hardly recognised myself. Whence did my boldness, confidence, and even audacity, come, all at once ? 'Nothing can confuse me now,' thought I, walking carelessly up and down the saloon ; 'I am ready for anything.'

Sereja asked me to be his *vis-à-vis*. 'Very well,' said I. 'I have not got a partner yet, but I will find one.' Having glanced round the saloon in a very decided manner, I observed that all the young ladies were engaged except one, who was standing near the drawing-room door. A tall young man was approaching her, as I concluded, in order to invite her to dance ; he was close to her and I was at the opposite end of the saloon. In the twinkling of an eye, sliding gracefully along the floor, I crossed the whole space which separated us, and, having made a bow, I asked her in a firm tone to dance a quadrille with me. The tall young lady smiled patronizingly, gave me her hand, and thus the young gentleman was left without a partner.

I had such a high opinion of myself that I paid no attention to the young gentleman's anger, but afterwards heard that he asked who the dishevelled boy was who had come rushing past and had taken his partner away from him before his face.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MAZURKA.

THE young man whom I had thus deprived of a partner danced the mazurka in the first pair. He rose from his seat, holding the lady's hand, and instead of making a 'pas de Basques,' as we had been taught to do by Mimi, simply ran forwards, and on reaching the corner he stopped, with his legs far apart, stamped with his heel, and then ran on again.

As I had no partner for the mazurka I sat behind my grandmother's large armchair, looking on.

'What is he doing?' said I to myself. 'It is just the contrary of what Mimi taught us. She assured us that people danced the mazurka standing on tiptoe, that they danced it lightly and described a round with their legs; but now I find that they dance it very differently. There are the Ivins, Stephen and others dancing; none of them made the "pas de Basques;" even Volodja imitates their new way of dancing. It does not look bad at all! . . . And what a darling Sonitchka is! Now she begins. . . .' I felt very merry indeed.

The mazurka was drawing to a close; several old ladies and gentlemen were approaching grandmother to take their leave and depart; the lackeys were passing backwards and forwards amongst the dancers, carefully carrying dishes into the back rooms; grandmother was evidently tired, and she was talking lazily and very slowly; the musicians began for the thirtieth time to play the same tune. The tall young lady

with whom I had danced observed me, and, smiling treacherously, came up to me with Sonitchka and one of the numerous young princesses, wishing, perhaps, by so doing to please my grandmother.

‘What do you choose—a rose or nettles?’ asked she.

‘You are here! Go, my dear boy, go,’ said grandmother, turning round in her armchair.

At that moment my most earnest desire was to hide my head under grandmother’s armchair rather than move from behind it; but how could I refuse? I got up, said ‘The rose,’ and glanced timidly at Sonitchka. I had hardly recovered from my confusion when somebody’s hand in a white glove lay in mine, and the princess set off, without having any suspicion that I absolutely did not know what I was to do with my legs.

I felt that the ‘pas de Basques’ would be misplaced, unsuitable; but the familiar sounds of the mazurka, affecting my ear, communicated a certain direction to my acoustic nerves, which in their turn caused my feet to move; and so my legs became involuntarily, and, to the surprise of all the spectators, to dance the fatal light ‘pas’ on tiptoe. While we were going straight forward all went on pretty well, but on turning I observed that if I did not take care I should be greatly in advance. To avoid such a disagreeable thing I stopped, intending to make the same sudden turn that the young man who danced in the first pair had done. But at that moment, as I was ready to bound forwards, the princess, turning quickly round, looked at my legs with an expres-

sion of curiosity and astonishment. The glance stupefied me. I got so confused that instead of dancing, I stamped my feet on the floor in the strangest manner without moving an inch further, and without keeping time to the music in the least, and at last stopped short. All stared at me; some with surprise, others with curiosity; some again seemed to pity me; my grandmother alone looked on very coolly.

'Il ne fallait pas danser, si vous ne savez pas!' said papa's voice angrily in my ear, and, pushing me aside, he placed my partner's hand in his, and took a turn with her according to the old fashion, amidst murmurs of applause from the spectators, and led her to her place. The mazurka then ended at once.

My Lord! why dost Thou punish me so awfully?

* * * * *

Everybody despises me, and will ever despise me . . . the paths of friendship, love, honour . . . are all closed before me . . . all is lost! Why did Volodja make me signs which all could see, and which were of no use to me? Why did this disgusting princess look at my legs? Why did Sonitchka . . . she is a darling still—but why did she smile at the time? Why did papa get red in the face and seize me by my arm? Is it possible that even he was ashamed of me? Oh, it was dreadful! Were mamma here, she would not have blushed for her Nicolinka . . . and my fancy carried me away towards the beloved figure. I recollected the meadow before the house, the high lime-trees of our garden, the clear pond, above which the larks might be seen flying about; the blue sky, with white transparent clouds here and there; the

fragrant stacks of new-mown hay ; and many other calmly radiant remembrances arose in my troubled mind.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AFTER THE MAZURKA.

THE young man who had danced in the first pair took his place for supper at the children's table, and during the whole time paid particular attention to me, a thing which would of course have gratified my self-love, if I had been capable of thinking at all after the misfortune which had happened to me. But it seemed the young man wished to make me feel merry again ; he jested with me, called me a brave boy, and whenever none of our elders were looking at us, he filled my glass with different kinds of wine one after another, and forced me to drink. Towards the end of supper, when the major-domo poured me a quarter of a glass of champagne out of a bottle, which was wrapped up in a napkin, the young man insisted on his filling my glass, and forced me to empty it at a draught, after which I felt a pleasant warmth pass through my whole body, with a particularly kindly feeling towards my lively protector, and I burst out into a merry laugh.

Suddenly the tune of 'The Grossfater'* reached our ears from the saloon, and all hastily left the table. My friendship with the young man was immediately over ; he joined the grown-up people, but I dared not

* A very popular dance in Russia, generally the last dance at a ball.

follow him. Approaching Mrs. Valahoff, I began to listen with curiosity to the conversation between her and her daughter.

‘Only half an hour more,’ asked Sonitchka in a tone of entreaty.

‘Impossible, my love!’

‘Well, for my sake, pray do,’ said she caressingly.

‘Can you enjoy yourself, knowing that I shall fall ill to-morrow?’ said Mrs. Valahoff, while her smile belied her words.

‘Ah! leave is given! Yes? We remain?’ said Sonitchka, jumping up joyously.

‘What am I to do? Go and dance . . . here is a partner for you,’ said her mother, pointing to me.

Sonitchka gave me her hand, and we ran into the saloon.

Both the wine which I had drunk, and the presence of the merry Sonitchka, made me quite forget my unlucky mischance during the mazurka. My legs played the most amusing tricks: either I trotted along slowly, imitating a horse, or pranced proudly along, or stamped like a sheep provoked by a dog; and I did it laughing heartily all the time, and paying no attention to the impression I was producing on the bystanders. Sonitchka did not cease laughing the whole time: she laughed when we turned round and round holding each other’s hands; she laughed, looking at some old gentleman who, stepping measuredly along the floor, passed over the handkerchief as if it were a difficult thing for him to do; and she laughed still more heartily when, in order to prove my agility, I jumped almost up to the ceiling.

On passing grandmother's study, I glanced at myself in the glass: my face was covered with perspiration, my bushy hair stuck up more than ever; but the general expression of my face was so merry, kind, and healthy, that I liked my own looks.

'If I always looked as I do now,' thought I, 'people might find me nice-looking.'

But when I again turned to the pretty face of my partner, I saw there, instead of the expression of merriment, health, and recklessness which I had admired in my own face, so much of exquisite, delicate beauty, that I felt vexed with myself; I understood how stupid I was to hope to attract the attention of such a beautiful creature.

I could not hope to be loved in return—I did not even dream of it; my heart was full of happiness without that. I did not understand that the love which filled my heart with delight could require any greater happiness than that, or could long for anything, except that the feeling should never cease. I felt perfectly happy. My heart fluttered like a bird, the blood rushed incessantly to it, and I felt ready to shed tears of joy.

When we were passing through the corridor, where under the staircase there was a dark store-room, I glanced into it, and thought what perfect happiness I should enjoy, if I could lead my whole life with her in that dark room, without anybody guessing that we were there.

'Is not it pleasant to-night?' I asked her in a low and trembling voice, and hastened forward, frightened, not so much at what I had said, as at what I had intended to say.

‘Yes . . . indeed!’ answered she, turning her pretty head towards me with such a frank, kind look on her face that I ceased to fear.

‘Especially after the supper. . . . But if you only knew how I regret’ (I wished to say how very unhappy I was, but I dared not use that phrase) ‘that you are soon going to leave us, and we shall meet no more!’

‘Why shall we not see each other any more?’ asked she, looking fixedly at the tips of her shoes, and passing her finger over the transparent screen, before which we were passing at the moment. ‘I take a drive every Tuesday and Friday with mamma along the Tverskoi.* Do you never go out for a walk?’

‘In any case, next Tuesday we will ask leave to take a walk; and if they do not let me go, I will run away alone, even without my hat. I know the way.’

‘Do you know,’ said Sonitchka suddenly, ‘in speaking with some boys who come to us, I always say *thou* instead of *you*; let us also say *thou* to each other. Dost thou agree?’ added she, shaking her little head, and looking up into my face.

At that moment we were entering the saloon, where the second and most lively part of the ‘Grossfater’ was beginning.

‘I agree with . . . you,’ said I, when I thought the music and the noise would deaden my last word.

‘I agree with *thee*, and not with *you*,’ said Sonitchka, correcting me, with a smile.

The ‘Grossfater’ was over at last, and I had not yet managed to say a single sentence with ‘*thou*,’ although I had not ceased thinking of many in which

* A fashionable street in Moscow.

the pronoun 'thou' might very often have been used. My courage failed me. 'Dost thou agree?' 'I agree with thee,' sounded in my ears, and made me feel like one intoxicated. I had neither seen anything nor anybody except Sonitchka. I saw the locks of her hair pushed back from her face, and put behind her ears, thus displaying the parts of her forehead and temples which I had not seen before; I saw her wrapped up in the green shawl so closely, that only the end of her nose was visible; I saw that if she had not made a small opening for her little mouth with her rosy fingers, she would have been stifled; I saw, too, as she followed her mother downstairs, she turned her head towards us, nodded, and disappeared.

Volodja, Ivin, the young prince, and I had all fallen in love with Sonitcha, and, standing on the staircase, followed her with our eyes. I do not know to whom she had nodded in particular, but at that moment I felt quite convinced that it was to me alone.

When the Ivins were taking leave of us, I spoke quite unconstrainedly with Sereja, and even shook hands with him very coldly. If he understood that from that day he had lost both my love and his power over me, he must have regretted it, although he endeavoured to look quite indifferent.

For the first time in my life I was unfaithful to my love, and for the first time experienced the sweetness of that feeling. I felt extremely happy to have exchanged my worn-out feeling of habitual devotion for a vivid love, full of mystery and uncertainty. Besides, to cease loving one, and at the same time to fall in love with another, means to begin to love twice as deeply as before.

CHAPTER XXIV.

IN BED.

‘HOW could I have loved Sereja so passionately and so long?’ deliberated I, lying in my bed. ‘No! he never understood me; he was unable to appreciate my love, and was never worthy of it . . . But Sonitchka! What a darling she is! How sweetly she smiled when she said: “Dost thou agree?” “It is thy turn to begin . . .”!’

I jumped up in my bed, vividly picturing her pretty face, covered my head with the blanket, tucked it round me on all sides, and when I saw that I was well wrapped up, I lay down, feeling nice and warm, and gave myself up to sweet fancies and remembrances. Staring fixedly at the lining of my blanket, I saw her as distinctly before me as I had done an hour before. I talked to her in my thoughts, and although the conversation had no sense at all, it gave me inexpressible delight, because the pronouns *thou*, *to thee*, *with thee*, *thine*, were constantly used.

I fancied it all so vividly that I could not sleep from the delightful emotion, and I longed to share the abundance of my happiness with somebody.

‘My darling!’ said I, almost aloud, turning round in my bed. ‘Art thou asleep, Volodja?’

‘Not yet,’ answered he in a sleepy voice. ‘What dost thou want?’

‘I am in love, Volodja!—absolutely in love with Sonitchka.’

‘Well, what of that?’ replied he, stretching himself.

‘Ah, Volodja! thou canst not think what I feel. . . . Just now, as I lay rolled up in my blanket, I saw her so vividly before me—even talked with her! Is it not strange? And dost thou know when I lie thinking about her, I do not know how it is, but I feel sad and ready to weep.’

Volodja moved about in his bed without answering.

‘I only long for one thing,’ continued I; ‘it is to be always with her, to see her continually; I want nothing else. Art thou in love, Volodja? Do confess; tell me the truth.’

It was a very strange idea, but I wanted all to be in love with Sonitchka, and all to talk of it.

‘What is that to thee?’ said Volodja, turning his face towards me; ‘perhaps I am.’

‘Thou dost not want to sleep; thou art only pretending,’ cried I, having noticed by the brightness of his eyes that he was very far from being sleepy, and threw my blanket aside. ‘What a darling she is! Dost thou not think so? . . . Such a darling, that were she only to say to me, Nicolinka, jump out of the window, or rush into the fire, I swear I would do so at once with pleasure! Oh, what a darling she is!’ I exclaimed, picturing her vividly before my eyes, and wishing to enjoy it to the full. I turned quickly to the other side of the bed, and buried my head under the pillow. ‘I can hardly restrain my tears, Volodja.’

‘What a fool!’ answered he, smiling; and then, after a moment’s silence, he continued: ‘As for me, I would act very differently. I think that if it were possible, I should long at first to sit close to her and talk. . . .’

‘ Ah, Volodja ; thou art in love with her too,’ interrupted I.

‘ And then . . . ’ continued Volodja, smiling tenderly—‘ then I would kiss her beautiful fingers, her eyes, her lips, her pretty nose, her feet—in one word, I would kiss her all over. . . . ’

‘ Nonsense ! ’ cried I from under the pillow.

‘ Thou dost not understand anything about it,’ said Volodja contemptuously.

‘ Yes, I do, but thou dost not ; and thou talkest great nonsense,’ answered I tearfully.

‘ There is nothing to weep about. Thou art quite a girl ! ’

CHAPTER XXV.

THE LETTER.

ON April 16, almost six months after the day described above, my father came up to our room, where we were studying our lessons, and told us that we were going to the country that very night. My heart throbbed at the news, and my thoughts immediately turned to my mother.

The cause of our hasty departure was the following letter :

‘ Petrovskoje,

‘ April 12, 10 p.m.

‘ I have just received thy kind letter of April 3, and, according to my usual habit, I answer it immediately. Theodor brought it from town yesterday, but as he came very late, he only handed it to Mimi this morning. Mimi, under the pretext that I was

unwell and nervous, did not give it to me the whole day. It is true that I was a little feverish, and must tell thee frankly that for the last four days I have not been well, and have not risen from my bed.

‘Pray do not be anxious about me, my dear ; I now feel pretty well again, and, with Ivan Vasilievitch’s leave, hope to get up to-morrow morning.

‘It was on Friday last that I went out for a drive with the children ; but not far from the spot where the highroad begins, near the little bridge, which I always felt nervous about crossing, the horses stuck in the mire. The weather was beautiful, and it occurred to me to walk a little way, while our carriage was being drawn out. On reaching the chapel I felt very tired and sat down to rest ; but more than half an hour passed before the people could get the carriage-wheels out of the mire, and I felt rather cold, especially in my feet, for I had very thin shoes on, and my feet were wet. After dinner I felt cold and feverish, but continued to go about as usual, and after the evening tea I sat down to play duets with Lubotchka (thou wilt be surprised at the progress she has made). But fancy my surprise when I found myself unable to beat time ! I began again and again, but with the same result : my head felt dizzy, and I had a strange noise in my ears. I counted one, two, three, and went on to eight, fifteen ; but it was most curious, that I knew I was all wrong, and yet could not help it. At last Mimi came up and forced me to go to bed. Thus, my love, thou hast the minutest particulars of my illness, and how it was all my own fault. The next day I was in a high fever ; our kind old Ivan

Vasilievitch came. He has been staying at our house ever since, and promises to set me up very soon. What an amiable old fellow he is! When I was in a burning fever, and quite delirious, he sat up, without closing his eyes all night, near my bed; and now, while I am writing, he is with the children in the sitting-room, and from my bedroom I hear him telling them German stories, and their loud bursts of laughter.

‘*La belle Flamande*, as thou callest her, has now been staying at our house for more than a week, because her mother has gone away on a visit, and, by her close attention to me, has given proof of the sincerest attachment. She tells me all the secrets of her heart. Thanks to her pretty face, her kind heart, and her youth, she would be in all respects a delightful girl, if she were only in good hands; but the society in which she lives, according to her own account, will certainly ruin her. The idea very often occurs to me, that, if I had fewer children, it would be doing a good action to take her into our family.

‘Lubotchka wished to write to thee herself, but has just torn up the third sheet of paper, saying: “I know how satirical papa is. If there be the most trifling mistake, he will show it to everybody.” Katenka is as pretty as ever, and Mimi as kind and as tiresome.

‘Now I must talk to thee about business. Thou writest that our affairs do not go on well this winter, and that thou art obliged to take the income from the Kabarovka Estate. It seems strange to me that thou shouldst ask me for my consent. Is not all that is mine, thine as well?

‘Thou art so kind, my dear husband, that, fearing to grieve me, thou concealest the real state of our affairs; I suspect that thou hast lately lost a large sum at cards, but I swear to thee it does not grieve me in the least; therefore, if there is any possibility of putting our affairs in order, please do not think about me, and do not torment thyself uselessly. I have long learnt never to reckon, not only upon the money which thou mayst win, but, forgive me for saying so, even upon thine own fortune, for the children. I do not rejoice when thou winnest, neither do I grieve over thy losses; the only point which vexes me is, that thy passion for cards robs me of part of thy tender love, and forces me to tell thee such a bitter truth as I do now—God knows how painful it is for me to do so! I do not cease to pray for one thing only, that He should keep us . . . not from poverty (what is poverty?) but from the dreadful position in which the interests of the children, which I shall have to defend, will clash with ours. So far God has heard my prayers—thou hast not transgressed the point which might lead us either to sacrifice our whole fortune, which is but our children’s, or—I shudder at the thought—to that dreadful suffering hovering over our heads like the sword of Damocles. Yes, it is a heavy cross sent to us both.

‘In reference to the children, you again return in your letter to our former discussions: you ask me to let them be sent to a school. You know my prejudices against such an education. . . .

‘I do not know if thou wilt agree with me or not, but in all cases I entreat thee, for my sake, to promise

me faithfully that, till the end of my days, and even after my death, if it be God's will to part us, thou wilt never put that project of thine into execution.

'Thou tellest me that thou must go to St. Petersburg on business. Christ's blessing go with thee, my love ; go, and come back as soon as possible. We all feel very dull without thee. The spring is wonderfully fine ; the double door of the balcony has been taken out ; the path to the greenhouse has been for the last four days quite dry ; the peach-trees are in full bloom ; a few patches of snow are seen here and there only ; the swallows have returned ; and Lubotchka brought me the first spring flowers to-day. The doctor says I shall soon be quite well, and that in three days' time he will give me leave to go out and breathe the fresh air, and warm myself in the April sunbeams. Good-bye, my friend ; do not be alarmed either by my illness or thy loss ; finish thy business as quickly as possible, and come here with the children to spend the whole summer with us. I have formed many delightful plans for this summer, and your presence alone is wanting for their fulfilment.'

The next part of the letter was written in French on another scrap of paper, in a close and uneven handwriting. I translate it word for word :

'Do not believe what I have written to thee about my illness ; nobody suspects how serious it really is. I know that I shall never recover. Do not lose a moment ; come at once, and bring the children. Maybe I shall yet be able to kiss them once more and bless them : it is my last and only wish. I know

what a dreadful blow it will be for thee to read these lines ; but sooner or later thou must hear it from others, if I do not tell thee myself. Let us try to bear the misfortune with firmness, and hope in God's mercy. Let us submit to His will.

‘ Pray do not think that this is but the delirium of a sick fancy ; on the contrary, my thoughts at this moment are particularly clear, and I am quite calm. Do not comfort thyself vainly by the hope that these words are but the false, indistinct forebodings of a nervous invalid. No ; I feel, I know -- I know, because God has chosen to reveal it to me, that I have but a very short time to live.

‘ Will my love for thee and our children end with my last breath ? I see clearly that it cannot. I feel too deeply at this moment to think that a feeling, which seems a part of my very existence, can ever be annihilated. My soul cannot exist without loving thee, and I *know it* will not die ; because I believe that a love such as mine could never have sprung into life, if it were not destined to live for ever.

‘ I shall soon be parted from you, but I am firmly convinced that my love will never leave you ; and this thought fills my heart with such joy that I await the approach of death calmly, and without fear.

‘ I am quite calm, and God knows that I have always thought of death but as a passage to a better life ; yet, why can I not keep back my tears ? Why must the children be deprived of a mother whom they love ? Why must such a heavy and unexpected blow fall upon you ? Why must I die so early, when your love has made my life so infinitely blessed ?

‘God’s holy will be done !

‘My tears prevent my continuing my letter. It may be that I shall see thee no more. I thank thee, my beloved friend, for all the happiness with which thou hast filled my life ; I will ask God to reward thee. Farewell, my best friend ; remember that, though I am no more, my love will never fail thee. Good-bye, Volodja ! good-bye, my love ! farewell, my Benjamin-Nicolinka !

‘Will a time come when they will forget me ? . . .’

Mimi enclosed a note in French ; it ran thus :

‘The doctor told me yesterday that the sad forebodings which her letter breathes are far from being groundless. Last night she ordered me to send the letter to the post-office immediately. Thinking she was delirious, I waited till the morning, then determined to open it. Hardly had I broken the seal, when Natalia Nicolaevna asked me what I had done with the letter, and enjoined me to burn it, if it were not yet sent off. She goes on talking about it, and says that it will kill you. Do not postpone your arrival here, if you wish to see our *angel* once more, before she leaves us for ever. Pray excuse my scribbling. I have not closed my eyes for the last three nights. You know how I love her !’

Natalia Savishna, who spent the whole night of April 11 in mother’s bedroom, told me afterwards that when she had finished the first part of the letter, she laid it near her on the table and fell asleep.

‘I confess,’ continued Natalia Savishna, ‘I did the

same while sitting in the armchair near her, and the stocking fell out of my hands. Suddenly, about midnight, I was aroused by hearing her talk. I opened my eyes, and what did I see? She was sitting upon her bed—the darling!—clasping her hands like this, and weeping bitterly. “Then all is over!” was all she said, and she buried her face in her hands.

‘I arose and asked her: “What is the matter with you?”

“Ah, Natalia Savishna! if you only knew whom I saw just now!”

‘But she would not answer any further questions, only ordered me to move the table nearer to her, added something to her letter, ordered me to seal it in her presence, and to send it off at once. After that she grew worse and worse.’

CHAPTER XXVI.

WHAT AWAITED US AT HOME.

ON April 25 we left our carriage near the porch of Petrovskoje House. On leaving Moscow, papa was very thoughtful; and when Volodja asked him, ‘Is mamma ill?’ he looked at him sadly, and silently nodded assent. During the journey he evidently grew calmer, but as we drew nearer home his face grew more and more mournful; and when, on leaving the carriage, he asked Foka, who was quite out of breath from the haste he had made to meet us, ‘How is Natalia Nicolaevna?’ his voice had lost its firmness, and his eyes were full of tears. Good old Foka stole

a look at us, cast down his eyes, and opening the door of the antechamber, turned his face aside, and answered :

‘ It is the sixth day that she has not left her room.’

Milka, I was afterwards told, had not ceased howling dolefully from the very first day mother fell ill, and now sprang towards my father fawning upon him, and licking his hands ; but he pushed it aside, and went to the drawing-room, then reached the parlour, whence the door led straight to the bedroom. As he approached the room, his agitation increased visibly. When he entered the parlour, he advanced on tiptoe, hardly breathing, and made the sign of the cross before he touched the handle of the door. Just at that moment Mimi, with her eyes red with weeping, and with her hair all hanging loose, came in from the corridor.

‘ Ah, Peter Alexandrovitch !’ said she in a low voice, with an expression of unfeigned despair ; then, observing that papa was turning the door-handle, she added in a whisper : ‘ You cannot go in by that way ; the entrance is from the other side.’

Oh, how deeply did all this sink into my childish fancy, tuned to sorrow by a dire foreboding !

We went to the maid’s room. On our way thither we met, in the corridor, Akim the idiot ; he had always amused us by his odd grimaces, but at the present moment I saw nothing droll about him—indeed, nothing struck us so painfully as the aspect of his senselessly indifferent face. Two maidservants, who were sitting in the room at some needlework, rose with such a mournful expression on their faces

to greet us that I grew frightened. Passing through Mimi's room also, papa opened the bedroom door, and we entered.

On the right-hand side from the door were two windows closely covered with shawls. Close to one window sat Natalia Savishna, with her spectacles on her nose, knitting a stocking. She did not kiss us as she usually did, but only rose a little, looking at us over her spectacles, while the tears streamed down her cheeks. It impressed me disagreeably to see that all those whom I remembered always to have seen serene and calm should be unable to look at us without tears.

On the left side from the door was a screen ; beyond it were the bed, a small table, a chest full of medicines, and a large armchair, in which the doctor was dozing. Close to the bed stood a very beautiful girl with very light hair. She wore a white morning-gown, with the sleeves turned up a little ; she was putting some ice on mother's head ; I did not see the latter at first. This young lady was *la belle Flamande*, whom mamma had mentioned in her letter, and who afterwards played such an important part in the life of our whole family. As soon as we entered, she raised one of her hands from mother's head, and settled the folds of her dress on her breast, then whispered, 'She is slumbering.'

I was in great grief at that moment, yet I involuntarily observed all the minutest details. It was quite dark in the room, and very hot ; there was a smell of mint, eau-de-Cologne, camomile, and Hofman's drops. The smell struck me so forcibly that

even now, whenever I perceive it, or even remember it, my fancy transfers me in the twinkling of an eye to that dark suffocating room, and reproduces in my mind all the sad details of those awful moments.

Mother's eyes were open, but she saw nothing. . . . Oh! never shall I forget that dreadful look! How full of suffering it was!

We were taken out of the room.

When I afterwards asked Natalia Savishna about the last minutes of my beloved mother's life, she gave me the following account :

' When you went away she writhed for some time as if in great suffering, then dropped her dear head upon the pillow, and fell into a doze, so calmly, so quietly, looking just like an angel from heaven. I went out to ask why they did not bring her drink, and when I returned a few minutes after, I saw that my poor darling was awake again, and was beckoning to your father to approach. He bent over her, but her strength was evidently failing her, and she could not say what she wished : she only unclosed her lips, and groaned : " O Lord! O God! the children, the children!" I was going to call you back, but Ivan Vasilievitch stopped me and said : " Do not bring the children ; it will excite her more." After that she could only feebly raise her hand several times. God only knows what she wished to say. I think that she was blessing you in your absence. It did not please God to let her see her beloved children before she breathed her last. Suddenly my poor darling rose, crossed her arms, and began to say in a voice that I cannot recall even now without terror :

“Holy Virgin, watch over them!” . . . And then the pain came up to her heart. We could see by her eyes how dreadfully she was suffering. She turned on the pillow, and even seized the sheet with her teeth, the tears running down her cheeks all the time.’

‘Well, and then?’ asked I.

Natalia Savishna could not utter a word more ; she turned her head aside and wept bitterly.

Mother expired in dreadful suffering.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MY GRIEF.

THE next day I longed to look at her once more. It was very late in the evening. Conquering an involuntary feeling of terror, I slowly opened the door, and slipped on tiptoe into the saloon.

The coffin was standing in the middle of the room on a table, which was surrounded with tapers in large silver candlesticks. In a distant corner sat the chaunter, slowly reading the Psalms in a monotonous voice.

I stopped close to the door and looked in, but my eyes were so red with weeping, and my nerves so excited, that I could see nothing. The lights, the brocade, the velveteen, the large candlesticks, the rose-coloured pillow trimmed with lace, the band of paper round her forehead with the saint-images of our Saviour and St. Mary, a cap with ribbons, and something transparent and waxlike, were all blended strangely together. I got up on to a chair to see her

face, but instead of it there lay something pale, yellow, and transparent before me. I could not believe it was her face. I looked fixedly at it, and by degrees began to recognise in it the dear, familiar features. I shuddered when I did so, and knew that this *something* was my mother. But why had her closed eyes sunk thus into her head? Why was she so dreadfully pale, and why was a dark spot visible through her transparent skin on one of her cheeks? Why was the expression of her face so stern and so cold? Why were her lips so bloodless, and their lines so fair, so grand? Why did they express such unearthly calmness, that a cold shiver passed through me as I looked at them? . . .

I looked, and felt as if some incomprehensible, irresistible force attracted my eyes towards the lifeless face. I did not take my eyes off it, and my imagination called up one picture after another of blooming life and happiness. I forgot that the dead body which lay before my eyes, and which I looked down upon so senselessly, as if there was nothing in common between it and my remembrance of the past, was the mother I loved so dearly. I fancied her again as I had so often seen her, alive, gay and smiling; then suddenly some feature in her pale face attracted my eyes, and I remembered the dreadful reality. I trembled, but could not take my eyes off her face. And dreamy remembrances drove the sad reality out of my mind, only to give way to the reality again. At last my imagination grew weary; it ceased to mock me; I lost all consciousness of everything around me. I do not know how long this state

lasted ; I do not know what it was ; I only know that I lost for the time all consciousness of existence, and experienced a kind of ineffably sweet, sad happiness.

It may be her soul, while leaving this world for a better one, looked pityingly down on those whom she was forsaking ; it may be she saw my sorrow, pitied it, and on the wings of love and with a heavenly smile of compassion glided back again to earth to comfort and to bless me.

The door creaked, and another chaunter entered to relieve the first. The noise roused me, and the first thought that came to my mind was, that as I was not crying, but simply standing on the chair in an attitude which had nothing pathetic in it, the chaunter would take me for an unfeeling boy, who had perched himself up on the chair out of curiosity. I made the sign of the cross, bowed my head on my hands, and burst into tears.

On looking back now it seems to me that that one moment of utter forgetfulness of self was true grief. Both before the funeral and after it I did not cease to weep and feel melancholy ; but I do not like to remember it, because a feeling of self-love mingled with all its manifestations : either a desire to show that I was more afflicted than the rest, or thoughts about the impression I produced upon others, or idle curiosity, which made me examine Mimi's cap or the faces of those around me. I hated myself for not experiencing exclusive grief, and endeavoured to hide my weakness from the others, and for that very reason my grief was insincere and unnatural. Besides, the knowledge that I was unhappy excited me agreeably.

I tried to keep up my consciousness of unhappiness, and it was that selfish feeling which acted most powerfully in stifling my real grief.

Having slept very soundly all night, as is always the case after some great sorrow, I awoke with my eyes dry and my nerves much calmed. At ten o'clock in the morning we were called to hear the requiem before the body was carried out. The room was full of servants and peasants of both sexes, who came, with the tears streaming down their faces, to give their last kiss to their dead mistress. I wept during the divine service, made the sign of the cross, and knelt out of decorum ; but I did not pray from the bottom of my heart, and was phlegmatic. I was anxious about my new coat, which was too tight under my arms ; thought about not dirtying my trousers when I knelt, and busied myself in stealthily observing those present. My father stood close to the head of the coffin ; he was as pale as a sheet, and with evident difficulty refrained from tears. His tall figure, dressed in a black dress-coat ; his pale and expressive face and his graceful gestures, which were as self-possessed as usual in making the sign of the cross or bending his body to touch the floor with his hand, instead of bowing to the ground ; the way in which he took the taper from the hands of the priest or approached the coffin—were extremely impressive ; but for some incomprehensible reason I did not like him to look so showy at such a moment. Mimi was leaning against the wall, and seemed as if she could hardly stand ; her dress was in disorder and covered with down ; her cap was awry ; her swollen

eyes were red ; her head shook and she did not cease sobbing in a heart-broken manner, hiding her face in her handkerchief or in her hands. It seemed to me that she did so in order to have a few moments of respite, and to rest from her hypocritical sobs. I remembered that the day before she had said to father that the death of mother was a dreadful blow for her, and that she thought she should never be able to survive it ; that death had deprived her of all ; that that angel (she thus called mother) did not forget her before her death, and had expressed a wish to assure her future and that of Kate. She shed bitter tears while telling us all this, so it may be that her sorrow was true ; but it was not a pure and exclusive feeling. Lubotchka, in her black dress trimmed with white, her face all wet with tears, stood with bent head glancing at the coffin from time to time, and her face expressing nothing but childish terror. Katenka stood close to her mother, and in spite of her long face her cheeks were as rosy as ever. The frank, open disposition of Volodja was open in his sorrow ; he stood pensive, staring straight before him ; then his mouth would begin to twitch, and, observing it, he hastily made the sign of the cross over it and bowed his head. All the strangers who were present at the funeral procession provoked me. Their set phrases for my father's consolation—as, for example, that she would be happier there ; that she was not for this world—were most offensive to me.

What right had they to speak about her and to sorrow for her ? Some of them in speaking about us called us orphans. As if we wanted their explanations

to know that children who have lost their mother are called by such a name. Just as there are many who usually hasten to be the first to call a newly-married young lady 'madame,' so they were now pleased to be the first to give us the name of 'orphans.'

In the opposite corner of the saloon a hunchbacked, gray-haired old woman was hardly seen from behind the door of the butler's room, which was open. With her hands clasped and her eyes raised she was not weeping, but praying fervently. Her soul was rising towards God, asking Him in mercy to let her soon re-join the one whom she loved more than anybody else in the whole world, and earnestly hoping that her prayer would soon be granted her.

There is one who loved her truly, thought I, and I felt ashamed of myself.

The requiem was over; the face of my dead mother was uncovered, and all who were present began to approach the coffin one after another, and after having kissed* her went away.

Amongst the last who approached the deceased was a peasant's wife; she had a pretty little girl of about five years old in her arms; God knows why she brought her there. At that moment I had dropped my wet handkerchief on to the floor and was just going to pick it up, when, as I stooped to do so, a shrill scream was heard, expressive of such terror that were I to live a hundred years I should never be able to forget it; even now, when I think of it, a cold shudder passes through my whole body. I raised my head; the woman was now standing on

* Last kisses—a Russian custom.

the footstool near the coffin, and could hardly hold the child, who, waving her little arms, and throwing back her frightened little face, was staring wildly at mother's face and uttering a succession of violent shrieks. I, too, uttered a cry which, I think, must have been more dreadful than that which had struck me, and ran hastily out of the room.

It was only at that moment that I fully understood whence came that strong and heavy smell, which, mixing with the smell of benzoin, pervaded the room ; and the thought that the face that had been so lovely and kind a few days since, the face of her I loved most in the world, should excite terror, revealed the bitter truth to me for the first time, and filled my soul with despair.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MY LAST SAD REMEMBRANCES.

MAMMA is no more, but our life goes on as usual. We continue to go to bed and to rise at the same hour, and sit in the same rooms ; have tea in the morning and in the evening ; the time for dinner and supper is the same ; the tables and chairs stand in the same places ; nothing in our house, nothing even in the course of our lives, was changed—only she was no more. . . .

It seemed to me that, after such a misfortune, everything ought to have been changed ; our usual way of life seemed to me to be an insult to her memory, and reminded me still more vividly of her absence.

On the eve of the funeral, dinner being over, I wished to rest a little, and went to Natalia Savishna's room, intending to lie down on her bed of down, covered with a warm counterpane. When I entered, Natalia Savishna was lying on her bed, and I supposed she was asleep; but no sooner did she hear the sound of my steps than she arose, took off the woollen shawl with which she had covered her head to protect it from the buzzing flies, and setting her cap to rights, sat up on the edge of the bed.

As I formerly often used to come after dinner to take a nap in her room, she guessed the reason of my visit, and, rising, said to me:

'Well, I dare say you have come for a nap, my poor darling, haven't you? Well, lie down.'

'What an idea, Natalia Savishna!' answered I, holding her hand. 'I came for another reason . . . without any purpose. . . . You are tired yourself: it would be better for you to lie down.'

'No, my dear; I have slept quite enough,' said she. (I knew very well that she had had no sleep for the last three days and nights.) 'I do not feel inclined to sleep now,' added she, with a deep sigh.

I longed to talk with Natalia Savishna about my grief. I knew how sincerely she had loved my mother, and felt that it would be a comfort to weep with her.

'Natalia Savishna,' said I, after a short silence, sitting down on the bed, 'did you expect it?'

The old woman looked at me with perplexity and curiosity, as if she could not understand why I asked her the question.

'Who could have expected it?' repeated I.

‘Ah, my dear!’ answered she, casting upon me a glance of the kindest compassion, ‘not only did I not expect it, but I cannot even think of it now. I am an old woman; it has long been time for my old bones to rest, and yet I have lived to bury my old master, your grandfather, Prince Nicolai Mihailovitch (may God rest his soul!), two of my brothers, my sister Annie (they were all younger than I was, my dear), and now I am fated to survive her; surely it is for some great sin that God has punished me thus. His holy will be done! He has taken her because she was worthy to go; and He needs good souls in heaven.’

The simple thought comforted me, and I drew closer to Natalia Savishna. She crossed her arms on her breast, and raised her eyes to heaven; her tearful sunken eyes expressed great but calm grief. She firmly trusted that God had not separated her for long from one in whom, during so many years, all the fibres of her love had been bound up.

‘Yes, my dear; it seems as if it was not long ago since I nursed and swaddled her, and she called me “Nacha.”* She used to come running up to me, and, putting her little arms round me, would kiss me, saying: “Oh, my Nachik! my beauty! my sweet one!” And in reply to these dear words, I would say jokingly: “No, my dear, you do not love me. When you are a grown-up young lady, you will get married, and will, of course, forget your Nacha.” She would look thoughtfully at me. “No,” she would answer; “I will not marry at all, if I cannot take

* Nacha—in English, ‘our,’ and diminutive to ‘Natacha’ (Natalia).

Nacha with me. I will never leave Nacha." And now she has left me, and has not waited. And how sincerely she loved me! To say the truth, was there anybody whom she did not love? Yes, my dear, you ought never to forget your mother. She was not a woman, but an angel from heaven! As soon as her soul is in the kingdom of God, she will continue to love you there; from there she will rejoice with you.'

'Why do you say, Natalia Savishna, as soon as she is in the kingdom of God?' asked I. 'I think she is there now.'

'No, my dear,' answered Natalia Savishna, lowering her voice, and drawing closer to me on the bed; 'her soul is here yet.' And she pointed upwards. She spoke in a whisper, and with such feeling and conviction that I involuntarily raised my eyes, looking up at the ceiling as if I expected to see something there. 'Before the souls of the just enter paradise, they have to pass through forty trials, my dear, in the course of forty days, and they may visit their own homes. . . .'

She spoke a long time in the same style, and said it with such simplicity and confidence, as if she were talking about the most ordinary things which she was used to see, and the reality of which nobody could doubt. I listened to her, holding my breath, and although I did not understand quite well all she said, I trusted her completely.

'Yes, my dear, now she is here; she is looking at us; it may be she hears what we are talking about,' said Natalia Savishna in conclusion.

And, bowing her head, she sat quite still. Wanting

to get her handkerchief in order to dry her tears, she rose, looked fixedly at me, and said in a voice trembling with emotion :

‘God has brought me much nearer to Him by this. What is left to me now? For whose sake have I to live? Whom have I to love?’

‘Do you not love us?’ asked I reproachfully, and refraining with difficulty from bursting into tears.

‘God knows how sincerely I love you, my poor darlings! but I never did and never can love again as I loved her.’

She could say no more, but turned her head aside and sobbed aloud.

I thought of sleep no more; we sat silently opposite each other and wept.

Foka entered the room. Seeing our grief, and not wishing to disturb us, he stopped close to the door, looking at us silently and timidly.

‘What dost thou want, Fokasha?’ asked Natalia Savishna, drying her tears.

‘A pound and a half of raisins, four pounds of sugar, and three pounds of rice for the cutia,* please.’

‘Directly?’ said Natalia Savishna; and having hastily taken a pinch of snuff, she went with short but rapid strides towards the box. The last traces of the sorrow called up by our conversation disappeared when she began to fulfil her duty, which she considered a very important one. ‘Why dost thou want four pounds?’ grumbled she, taking the sugar out of the box and weighing it; ‘three pounds

* Rice boiled with raisins and sugar, and eaten after the Mass for the Dead.

and a half are quite enough.' And she took some pieces of sugar off the scales. 'And what does that mean? It was only yesterday that I gave eight pounds of rice, and now thou wantest some more. Foka Dmitrievitch, I will not give the rice. John is glad that there is a bustle in the house ; he thinks I shall not notice how much he takes. No, I am not going to allow any encroachment on our master's property. Who ever heard of such a thing—eight pounds of rice ?'

'What is to be done? He says there is none left.'

'Well, there, take it ! Let him have it !'

I was quite struck by the rapid transition from the touching pathos with which she had talked to me, to this grumbling about a mere trifle. On thinking it over afterwards, I understood that, whatever the state of her mind might be, she possessed sufficient energy to think of her duties, and the force of habit made her take an interest in her usual business. Grief had taken such a hold of her, that she did not find it necessary to conceal that she was nevertheless able to attend to every-day matters ; she would even have been quite unable to understand how such a strange idea as her being unable to do so could have come into anybody's mind.

Vanity is a feeling which can never go together with true grief, yet it is so firmly engrafted on human nature that even the greatest grief can seldom entirely eradicate it. Vanity in grief expresses itself by a wish to seem either afflicted, unhappy, or firm ; and this mean desire, which we do not confess even to ourselves, but which even under the heaviest affliction

never leaves us, deprives our grief of strength, dignity, and sincerity. But Natalia Savishna was so entirely overwhelmed by grief that in her heart there was no room left for any wish, and she continued the usual routine of her life only through habit.

Having given Foka the provisions required by him, and having reminded him of the pie, which was to be cooked for the entertainment of the clergy, she let him go, then took up her stocking and sat down close to me again.

The topic of conversation was the same, and we again shed tears and again wiped them away.

Our talks with Natalia Savishna went on day after day, and I found consolation and comfort in her quiet tears and in her calmly pious speeches.

But at last we had to part. Three days after mother's burial we all went to Moscow, and I was fated never to see Natalia Savishna again.

My grandmother learned the sad news only upon our arrival, and her grief was intense. We were forbidden to enter her room; she was unconscious during a whole week; her life hung on a thread, the physicians said; for she not only refused to take any medicines, but would not utter a word; did not sleep at all, and would take no food. Sometimes, while sitting alone in her room, she would suddenly begin to laugh, then to sob, without tears, or fall into fits, shrilly uttering meaningless or dreadful words. It was her first grief, and she was in despair. She sought to accuse somebody of the misfortune which had befallen her, and she used dreadful words, threatening somebody with extraordinary energy,

springing up from her armchair and striding rapidly up and down the room, after which she would again faint away.

I once entered her room: she sat as usual in her armchair and seemed calm, although her looks struck me. Her eyes were wide open, but her gaze was vague and dull. She looked at me, but did not, as it seemed, notice me. Her lips began slowly to smile, and she said, in a touchingly tender voice, 'Come here, my dear! come close to me, my angel!' I thought she was speaking to me, and approached; but she was looking at somebody else. 'Ah! if you only knew, my love, how I have suffered and how glad I am now you are come again!' . . . I saw then that she fancied mother was before her, and stopped. 'And I was told that you are no more!' continued she, frowning. 'What nonsense! How could you die before me?' And she burst out laughing hysterically.

Only those who are capable of loving deeply can feel deep grief too; but at the same time their loving natures bring about a reaction against grief, which saves them. That is why the moral nature of man is stronger than his physical nature. Grief never kills him.

In a week my grandmother was able to weep, and was getting better. Her first thought, when she recovered, was of us, and her love for us increased. We did not leave her, and she wept calmly, talking about our mamma and fondling us.

Nobody could have thought, on seeing grandmother's grief, that she exaggerated it; the expression of her sorrow was heartfelt and touching; yet, I know

not why, I sympathized more tully with Natalia Savishna, and I still feel convinced that nobody ever loved and regretted my mother as sincerely and as disinterestedly as this ignorant, loving creature did.

With my mother's life ended the happy time of my childhood, and a new period—*i.e.*, my adolescence—began ; but as my remembrances of Natalia Savishna, whom I saw no more, and who had had such a powerful and good influence upon the development of my feelings, belong to that first period, I will add a few words about her and her death.

After our departure, as the servants who were left on the estate told me afterwards, she felt very sad at having nothing to do. Although all the boxes were still under her care and she did not cease to examine them, to lay the things out over and over again, and to weigh and to portion out the rice and sugar and other household goods, she missed the noise and bustle of the master's presence in the house ; from her childish years she had been so used to that life. Grief, the change of life and want of bustling activity, rapidly developed in her a disease to which old women are often subject, and the germ of which she had long had. Exactly a year after my mother's death she fell a prey to the dropsy, and was unable to leave her bed.

It was hard, I think, for Natalia Savishna to live alone in our large empty house in Petrovskoje, and still harder to die all alone there, without relations or friends around her dying-bed. All in the house loved and esteemed Natalia Savishna ; but she had no friends, and was proud of it. She thought that in her position of housekeeper, possessing the entire con-

fidence of her masters, and having on her hands so many boxes filled with all kinds of things belonging to them, a friendship with those around might lead her to impartiality in a criminal conniving at malpractices; for that reason, or it may be in consequence of her not having anything to do with the other servants, she kept apart from all, and used to say that she had in the house neither gossips nor kinsmen, and that she would not allow any appropriating of her masters' property.

Giving vent to her feelings in a fervent prayer to God, she thus sought for consolation and found it; but sometimes in moments of weakness, such as all are subject to, when tears and the sympathy of some living creature are the best consolation, she would go to bed, taking her little pug-dog in her arms (the little animal licking her hands and staring at her with its yellow eyes): she would talk to it, weeping calmly, while she fondled it. When the pug-dog began to howl plaintively, she endeavoured to quiet it, saying: 'There, that will do; I know without your howling that I shall soon die.'

A month before her death she took some yards of white calico, some white muslin, and rose-coloured ribbons out of her own box. With the help of her servant-maid she made a white dress and a cap for herself, and gave the most minute details concerning the way she wished to be buried. She set in order all her masters' goods, wrote out a most exact inventory of all, and handed it to the steward; then she took out some former gifts of my grandmother's—two silk dresses, an old shawl, and my grandfather's uniform,

laced with gold, and examined them. Thanks to the care she had taken of them, the embroidery and gold lace were quite new, and the broadcloth had not been in the least moth-eaten.

On the eve of her death she expressed a desire that one of her two dresses, the rose-coloured one, was to be given to Volodja ; the other, the puce and striped one, to me, asking us to use the material for dressing-gowns ; the shawl was for Lubotchka. As to the uniform, she bequeathed it to the first of us who attained the rank of officer. All her other property, with the exception of forty roubles (£4), which she put aside for her funeral and for prayers to be said for the repose of her soul, she left to her brother. Her brother, who had long ago been enfranchised, was living in a distant village, and led a most dissolute life ; that was why she had held no intercourse with him during her lifetime.

When the brother of Natalia Savishna came to receive the heritage, and was told that the whole property of the deceased consisted of but twenty-five roubles, he would not believe it, and said it was quite impossible that an old woman, who during sixty years had all on her hands in a rich family, who had led a miser's life, and all the time grudged even a duster, could have left nothing after her death. But it was quite true.

During two months Natalia Savishna suffered and bore her sufferings with truly Christian patience ; she did not grumble ; not a word of complaint escaped her lips ; and in accordance with her usual custom, she constantly uttered the name of God. An hour before her

death she confessed her sins and received the last sacrament and extreme unction.

She asked all the servants to pardon any affronts which she might have put upon them, and asked her confessor, Father Basil, to tell us that she did not know how to thank us for all our kindness to her, and that she begged us to forgive her if through stupidity she had ever provoked any of us, but added that she had never been a thief, and could say with truth that she had never enriched herself, by a single thread even, taken from her masters. It was the one quality which she prided herself upon.

Having put on the dress and cap that she had had prepared, and leaning her elbow on the pillow, she did not cease to talk with the priest, and then, remembering that she had not left anything for the poor, she took ten roubles and asked him to distribute them amongst the poor in the parish ; then having made the sign of the cross, she lay down and breathed her last, with a peaceful smile and the name of God on her lips.

She left life without regret, did not fear death, and welcomed it as a boon. Such a death is often spoken of, but how seldom does anybody really die thus ! Natalia Savishna could face death without fear because she died in the firm belief that she had fulfilled the commandments of Christ. Her whole life had been one of pure and disinterested love and self-denial.

Her faith might perhaps have been more lofty and her life might have been directed towards a more elevated aim, but is such a pure soul as hers less worthy of love and wonder ?

She fulfilled the best and the highest purpose of life by dying without regret and fear.

According to her wish, she was buried near the chapel built over my mother's grave. The hillock under which she was laid is now overgrown with nettles and burdock and enclosed by a black railing, and I never forget, after visiting the chapel, to approach the railing and bow down to the ground before her grave.

Sometimes I stand silently between the chapel and the black railing. Sad thoughts of the past suddenly arise, and involuntarily the idea crosses my mind : is it possible that Providence united me with these two creatures only in order that I should for ever mourn their loss ? . . .

A D O L E S C E N C E .



CHAPTER I.

A JOURNEY TO TOWN.

TWO vehicles are once more at the door of Petrovskoje House — one, a carriage in which Mimi, Katenka, and Lubotchka are going, with the maid-servant; the steward, Jacob, sitting on the coach-box; the other, a chaise for Volodja, myself, and the man-servant, Vassily (a serf lately taken into our service).

Papa, who is to come to Moscow in a few days, stands on the staircase without his hat, and makes the sign of the cross over the window of the carriage and over our chaise.

‘God bless you! Drive on!’ Jacob and the two coachmen—we are going with our own horses—take off their caps and cross themselves. ‘Now then! God speed you!’ The coach and the chaise begin to jolt along the uneven road, and the birch-trees of the spacious avenue seem to fly past us. I do not feel sad at all. My thoughts are not turned upon what I am leaving, but upon what awaits me. As we go further from all the objects to which the sad memories are attached, which up to the present moment

had filled my mind, these remembrances fade, and give way to a buoyant feeling full of strength, freshness, and hope.

I have seldom passed a few days—I will not say as merrily, for I felt somewhat ashamed yet of giving way to merriment—but as pleasantly as the four days of our journey. I had no more before my eyes the closed doors of my mother's room, which I could not pass without a shudder; neither did I see the closed piano, which we not only avoided approaching, but which we looked at with a feeling of dread; I did not see our mourning-dresses—we were all in our usual travelling clothes—nor any of those things which, by vividly recalling to my mind the irreparable loss we had sustained, made me avoid every appearance of gaiety, for fear of wounding *her* memory in some way. Here, on the contrary, my mind was constantly diverted by new picturesque scenes and objects, while the fresh spring air instilled into me a delightful feeling of contentment with the present and bright hopes for the future.

Early, early in the morning the pitiless Vassily (too zealous in his duties, as people always are in a new function) pulls off the blanket, saying that it is time to set off, and that all is in readiness. In spite of all my shrinking, my anger and my artful efforts to protract my sweet morning sleep, if it were only for a quarter of an hour, I see by Vassily's resolute face that he is inflexible, and ready to pull off the blanket twenty times more; so I jump up and run into the yard to wash myself.

In the lobby the tea-urn is already boiling; Mitjka

the postilion, looking as red as a lobster, is blowing the fire; out of doors it is damp and foggy; something like steam rises from the dunghill; the sun illuminates the eastern part of the sky, and the straw-covered roofs of the spacious sheds which surround the back-yard glitter in the dew with a bright, cheerful light. Under them we see our horses tied to their mangers, and hear their measured chewing. A shaggy little dog, which had been crouching before daydawn on the dunghill, now sluggishly stretches itself, and, wagging its tail, trots off to the other end of the yard. The busy housewife opens the creaking gate, driving out the pensive cows into the street, whence the stamping, bellowing and bleating of the herd reach our ears, then exchanges a few words with her sleepy neighbour. Philip, with his shirt sleeves tucked up, pulls up a bucket out of the deep well by means of a wheel, and, splashing the clear water about, pours it into an oaken trough, round which a number of ducks are already splashing about in a pool; and I look with pleasure at the dignified, bearded face of Philip, and at the well-developed veins and muscles which are so clearly defined on his strong arms whenever he makes an effort.

Behind the partition-wall, where Mimi had slept with the girls, and across which we had talked with them the evening before, a bustling may be heard. Masha keeps running past our room, concealing various objects from our inquisitive gaze by covering them with her apron; at last the door is opened and we are called to tea.

Vassily, in his fit of superfluous zeal, is incessantly running into the room, first for one thing, then for another, winking at us and beseeching Maria Ivánovna to set off earlier. The horses are put to, and express their impatience by now and then rattling the little bells on their harness; trunks, boxes, cartoons, and small parcels, are again packed in, and we take our seats. But at every attempt to sit down in the vehicle we find hill-like knolls instead of a seat, and cannot make out how all had been packed in the day before, and how we are to sit now; there is one hazel-wood tea-box, with a triangular lid, placed in our chaise underneath my seat, which makes me feel most indignant. But Vassily says it will smooth down in time, and I am forced to believe him.

The sun has just risen above a compact white cloud, which covered the east, and sheds a bright, calm light all around. Everything is so beautiful, and my heart feels so light, so peaceful. . . . The road winds before us like a wide grayish ribbon—along the dry stubble-fields and along the meadows, glittering with dew; here and there beside the road you see a dark-looking cythesus, or a young birch-tree, with its tiny sticky foliage, casting long motionless shadows on the dry clay ruts and the green grass of the road. . . . The monotonous noise of the wheels and the tinkling of the little bells do not prevent our hearing the singing of the larks, which whirl close by the road. The smell of moth-eaten cloth, dust, and something sour, which pervades our chaise, is overpowered by the fragrant smell of morning, and I feel

a pleasant restlessness, a longing for action—the sign of true happiness.

I had no time to say my prayers at the inn ; but as I had more than once noticed that on the day when I by some chance forgot to do so, some misfortune was sure to happen to me, I now try to amend my fault, take off my cap, turn my face towards the corner of the vehicle, say my prayers, and make the sign of the cross under my jacket, so as not to be seen. But thousands of different things divert my attention, and I absently repeat the same words of the prayer several times running.

There on the pathway, which stretches along the side of the road, some figures slowly moving forwards are visible—these are pilgrims. Dirty handkerchiefs are bound round their heads ; on their backs they have wallets made of birch-bark ; their feet are wrapped in dirty torn rags, and they wear heavy bast shoes. Swinging their sticks monotonously to and fro, and hardly noticing us, they move along one after the other with slow, measured steps, and I ask myself, Where are they going ? and what for ? Whether theirs is a long journey, and whether the tall shadows which they cast on the road will soon join the shadow of the cythesus, which they will pass by ? Then we meet a carriage, with four post-horses, driving rapidly along from an opposite direction. Two seconds, and the faces, which at the distance of about two yards had looked so pleasantly and curiously at us, have already passed, and it seems strange to me that these persons have nothing in common with me, and that it may be I shall never see them again.

There on the roadside run two sweaty, shaggy horses, their collars with traces lashed behind the back-bands, and behind them sits a young lad, a post-boy, his long legs, in huge boots, hanging on both sides of the horse, over whose neck hangs a bow, and now and then the tinkling of the bell is faintly heard ; his lamb's-wool cap on one side, he is singing some drawling song. His face and attitude express so much idle, careless content, that it seems to me it must be the height of felicity to be a postboy, and to be riding home thus, singing melancholy songs. There, far beyond the ravine, against the light-blue sky, rises a village church, with its green roof ; there is a village, with the red roof of the landowner's house and a green garden. Who lives in that house ? I wonder whether there are any children in it—a father, a mother, a tutor ? Why should we not drive up to that house and make acquaintance with its inmates ? There comes a long train of huge carts, each drawn by three well-fed, thick-legged horses, and we find ourselves obliged to drive aside out of their way. 'What have you got there ?' says Vassily, addressing the front driver, who, with his feet dangling down the side of the cart, is swinging the whip to and fro. He stares fixedly and stupidly at us for some time, and only answers when we are too far to hear him. 'What goods have you got there ?' says Vassily, addressing the driver of the next cartload, who is lying on the front bar covered with a new mat. A fair-haired head with a red face and a reddish beard peeps out for a moment from beneath the mat, casts an indifferent, contemptuous glance at our vehicle, and

again disappears under the mat; and the thought strikes me that these drivers probably do not know who we are, whence we come, and where we are going.

For about an hour and a half after that I am rapt in thought, and pay no attention to the crooked posts which mark the number of miles we pass. But now the sun begins to scorch my head and back; the road gets more dusty; the triangular lid of the tea-box begins to inconvenience me greatly, and I alter my position several times—I begin to feel hot, uncomfortable, and weary. All my attention is directed towards the mile-posts and to the numbers marked on them; I make different kinds of mathematical calculations at what time we are likely to reach the next stage. Eight miles are one-third of twenty-four, and there are twenty-seven to Liepetz, consequently we have done one-third, and how much more?

‘Vassily,’ say I, noticing that he is dozing, ‘let me get on to the coach-box, pray.’ Vassily consents. We change places; he instantly begins to snore, and stretches himself out so that there is no room in the vehicle left for anybody else; while a lovely picture opens before me from the height where I am seated. Our four horses—Nerouchinskaja, Chanter, the Left Still-horse, and Apothecary—I examine them all, even to the least details and shades of the peculiarities of each.

‘Why is Chanter to-day on the right-hand side, and not on the left, Philip?’ I inquire somewhat timidly.

‘Chanter?’

‘And Nerouchinskaja is not drawing at all,’ say I.

‘Chanter cannot be put in the left-side,’ says Philip, ignoring my last remark; ‘it is not a horse like that that is to be put on the left-side trace. The left side requires a horse, a horse in the real sense of the word, but this is not one.’

And with these words Philip bends over to the right side, and with all his strength pulls the bridle and begins to lash poor Chanter over the tail and legs in a peculiar way from below; and though Chanter works hard, and draws along the whole vehicle almost alone, Philip only stops this manœuvre when he feels the necessity of resting, and, for some unknown reason, shoves his hat to one side, although up to that time it had rested securely and tightly on his head. I seize that favourable opportunity to ask Philip to let me drive. Philip gives me one rein first, then the other; at last all the six reins and the whip are in my hands, and I am quite happy. I try hard to imitate Philip. I ask him whether he approves of my driving, but the end is usually that he is dissatisfied with me, saying that one horse pulls hard, while the other does not pull at all, thrusts his elbow against my chest, and takes the reins from me. The heat keeps increasing, little white clouds begin to rise, like soap bubbles, higher and higher, then unite and assume dark-gray tints. From the window of the carriage a hand is stretched out with a bottle and a parcel; Vassily, with wonderful dexterity, jumps down from the coach-box without our stopping, and brings us some curd-cakes and kvass.*

* A liquor made of rye-flour and rye-malt.

On a steep descent we all get out of our coaches and race as far as the bridge, while Vassily and Jacob, having scotched the wheels, uphold the carriage on both sides, as if they could keep it from falling over. Then, with Mimi's permission, Volodja or myself get into the carriage, while Lubotchka or Katenka takes her seat in the chaise. This change of place affords much pleasure to the girls, because they find it much more pleasant to sit in the chaise. At times during the intense heat, when passing through a wood, we get out of the carriage, gather some green twigs, and construct a sort of arbour in the vehicle. The moving arbour overtakes the carriage at full speed, and Lubotchka shrieks shrilly, a thing she never fails to do whenever anything gives her great pleasure.

But here is the village where we are to dine and rest. Now we already perceive the smell of a village—smoke, tar, cracknels; we hear the sounds of voices, steps, and wheels; the bells do not tinkle any more as sonorously as they did in the open field, and cottages are seen on each side with their thatched roofs, carved-deal staircases, and small windows with red and green shutters, at which here and there the face of some inquisitive old woman appears. Peasant boys and girls in shirts alone stare at us, standing with their arms wide apart, motionless on one spot, or kicking up the dust with their naked little feet; in spite of the threatening gestures of Philip, they run after the coaches, and try to get on our trunks, which are strapped to the back of the carriage. Now several red-haired peasants come up to our carriages on both

sides, and by their words and gestures try to entice the travellers to their respective cottages. Stop! the gate creaks, the whipple-trees catch against the base of the gate, and we drive into the yard. Four hours of rest and liberty!

CHAPTER II.

THE TEMPEST.

THE sun was setting, and his slanting beams burnt my neck and cheeks insufferably; it was impossible to place my hand on the heated edge of the chaise; dense clouds of dust rose up along the road and filled the air. There was not a breath of wind to disperse them. In front of us, at some distance, rolled the high, dusty carriage, with our trunks fastened on the top, and from behind which, every now and then, the whip of the coachman, his hat, and Jacob's cap, might be seen. I did not know what to do with myself. The dust which had begrimed the face of Volodja, who was dozing by my side, the restlessness of Philip's back, the tall shadow of our chaise following us in the shape of a slanting triangle, did not afford me any diversion. All my attention was directed towards the mile-posts, which I could see at a distance, and towards the clouds, which had gradually spread over the horizon, and, assuming ominous shades, had now united into one large black cloud. Now and then the distant rolling of thunder reached my ears. This last circumstance increased

my impatience to reach the inn as quickly as possible. A thunderstorm always gave me a strange depressing feeling of weariness and dread.

The nearest village was still about seven miles off, and the large dark-blue cloud (God knows where it had come from, for there was not the slightest breeze) was moving towards us rapidly. The sun had not yet disappeared behind the clouds, and cast a vivid brightness over the dark cloud and the gray stripes which stretched from it along the whole horizon. Now and then flashes of lightning and a faint rolling noise is heard, gradually growing louder, approaching nearer and nearer, and changing into long irregular peals of thunder. Vassily gets down from the coach-box and draws the cover up ; the coachmen put their overcoats on, and at every peal of thunder take off their hats and make the sign of the cross ;* the horses prick up their ears, expand their nostrils as if sniffing the fresh air wafted from the dark cloud, which draws nearer and nearer as our chaise rolls rapidly along the dusty road. A feeling of awe comes over me, and my blood seems to circulate with greater rapidity in my veins. The nearest clouds begin to hide the sun ; now he looks out for the last time, casting his light on the awful gloom of that part of the horizon, and disappears. All the country around suddenly changes its aspect, and looks gloomy. The aspens in the wood begin to tremble ; the leaves rustle and assume a whitish colour, forming a striking contrast to the purple background of the cloud ; the summits

* The habit amongst the people of Russia.

of the tall birch-trees begin to shake, and blades of dry grass fly over the road. Martins and white-breasted swallows, as if in order to stop us, whirl round our chaise, and fly close to the very breasts of the horses; jackdaws, with outstretched wings, fly along sidewise with the wind; the edges of the leathern rug which covers us begin to flap, knocking against the chaise, and admitting gusts of moist wind upon us. There is a flash of lightning which seems to fill the chaise itself, dazzling our eyes and lighting up for an instant the gray cloth, the silk galloons, and the figure of Volodja cowering in a corner. At the same moment a grand peal of thunder is heard above our heads. The sound seems to ascend, gathering strength as it rolls along in its huge spiral course, higher and higher; becoming wider and wider in a huge spiral line, it gradually grows louder, and passes into a deafening crash, which makes us tremble involuntarily, and hold our breath. The wrath of God! How poetical is that common expression!

The wheels roll quicker and quicker. On looking at the backs of Vassily and Philip, who is nervously twitching the reins, I notice that they are afraid, too. Our vehicle rapidly goes down the hill, and with a rattling noise passes over the wooden bridge. I am afraid to move, and expect every moment that we shall all perish.

Halt! a whipple-tree has come off, and notwithstanding the uninterrupted, deafening peals of thunder, we are compelled to stop on the bridge.

Leaning my head against one side of the chaise,

I breathlessly and hopelessly watch the movements of Philip's thick black fingers, as he slowly lashes on the traces, pushing the side-horse with his hand and his whip.

The unpleasant sensation of uneasiness and fear increases as the storm grows more and more violent ; but when the sublime moment of silence has come—which is usually the forerunner of a violent peal of thunder—my feelings reach such a pitch that, had this situation lasted a quarter of an hour longer, I am sure I should have died of agitation. At that very moment from under the bridge appears a human being in a dirty, ragged shirt, and with a stupid, swollen face, a shaking, bare, shaved head, bandy legs, and a red glossy stump instead of a hand, which he pushes right into the chaise.

‘Good sir, help a poor wretch, for Christ’s sake!’ says the beggar in a weak voice, crossing himself and bowing low at each word.

I cannot describe the feeling of cold dread which filled my heart at that minute. A shiver ran through my whole body, while my eyes, stupefied with fear, were directed towards the beggar

Vassily, whose business it is to distribute alms during our journey, is giving Philip directions as to the fastening of the whipple-tree, and it is only when everything is done, and Philip, taking up the reins, has got on the coach-box again, that he gets something out of his pocket. But just as we are about to start, a dazzling flash of lightning, suddenly illuminating the whole vale with its fiery light, compels our horses to stop simultaneously with it ; such a deafening

crash of thunder rolls over our heads, that it seems as if the whole vault of heaven were going to crush us. The wind grows more violent ; the manes and tails of our horses, Vassily's cloak, and the edges of the rug are tossed in one direction, and are waved wildly about by the furious wind. But now a heavy drop of rain has fallen on the leathern cover of the chaise . . . another, a third, a fourth, and on a sudden it seemed as if the rolling of a drum were heard, and the monotonous pattering of the falling rain resounded all around. I notice by the jerking of Vassily's elbow, that he is undoing his purse, the beggar, continually crossing himself and bowing, keeps running close to the wheels, so that we may every moment expect to see him driven over. 'For Christ's sake, give me something !' At last a copper coin flies past us, and the poor wretch, his lean limbs covered with rags that are wet through, and shaking in the wind, stops, with a puzzled look, in the middle of the road, then disappears out of my sight.

The oblique rain, carried along by the violent wind, comes down as if it were poured out of buckets ; the rain streams down Vassily's frieze-coat into the pools of muddy water. The flashes of lightning grow fainter and wider, and the peals of thunder are less awful, lost in the monotonous sound of the falling rain.

But now the rain grows less ; the thunder-cloud begins to divide itself into fleecy clouds, and grows lighter where the sun might be, and through the gray-white edges of the cloud a bit of clear-blue sky peeps out. A minute more, and a shy sunbeam is already

glittering on the pools in the road, on the fine straight rain, which falls as through a sieve, and on the clear, glittering green of the grass by the roadside. The black cloud has overshadowed the opposite side of the horizon in the same threatening manner, but I fear it no more. I experience an indescribably joyous feeling of buoyancy, which rapidly takes the place of the depressing sensation of dread. My heart feels as joyous as the refreshed, enlivened nature around me seems to do. Vassily folds back the collar of his cloak, takes off his cap, and shakes the wet off it; Volodja throws aside the rug; I put my head out of the chaise, and greedily inhale the fresh, fragrant air. The shining, cleanly-washed frame of the coach, with the trunks fitted on the top of it, rocks backwards and forwards with its load in front of us; the horse's back, the traces, the reins, the tires of the wheels, are all wet, and glitter in the sun as if they had been varnished. The wet soil and grass of an immense winter cornfield, here and there intersected by shallow ditches, glitters before us on one side of the road, and stretches, like a shady carpet, to the very horizon; on the other side, an aspen-wood, with hazel-trees and wild cherry-trees here and there, stands, as if in an excess of happiness, without a rustle, while the drops of rain drip from its washed branches upon the dry dead leaves scattered around. The larks whirl above us, singing merrily, then rapidly shoot down; in the wet shrubs the bustling flutter of little birds is heard, and from the midst of the wood the note of the cuckoo reaches our ears. So bewitching is the wonderful fragrance of the wood after that early

storm, the fragrance of birch-trees, violets, of the mouldering last year's foliage, of mushrooms, wild cherry-trees, that I cannot stay in the chaise, but leap out, run towards the bushes, and though I get a shower of raindrops over me, I pluck some wet twigs of a wild cherry-tree in bloom, beat my face with the same, and inhale with delight the delicious odour. Without paying any attention to my boots, which are covered with mud, and to my socks, which are wet through, I splash along through the mud, and run up to the window of the coach.

'Lubotchka! Katenka!' I cry, handing a few twigs of the wild cherry-tree; 'look how beautiful!'

The girls cry out 'Oh!' Mimi shouts to me to go away, or I shall be driven over.

'But you just smell it; what fragrance!' I cry.

CHAPTER III.

I SEE THINGS UNDER A NEW ASPECT.

KATENKA sat beside me in the chaise, and, bending down her pretty little head, thoughtfully watched the road flying rapidly past under the wheels. I looked at her in silence, and was surprised at the sad expression, so unnatural in a child, which I then noticed on her rosy little face for the first time.

'Now we shall soon be in Moscow,' said I. 'How do you think it looks?'

'I do not know,' replied she reluctantly.

'Well, but how do you think it looks? is it larger than Serpouhoff or not?'

‘What did you say?’ she said.

And her wandering eyes showed that her thoughts were far away.

‘Oh, nothing of any consequence,’ I replied.

But by that instinctive feeling which enables one person to read the other’s thoughts, and which serves as a guiding-thread in a conversation, Katenka understood that her indifference grieved me. She raised her head, and, turning to me, said :

‘Did thy papa tell thee that we are to live at thy grandmamma’s?’

‘He did. Grandmother wants us to live with her entirely.

‘And shall we all be there?’

‘Of course. We shall occupy one part of the upper floor, you the other, and papa will live in the wing ; but we shall all dine together downstairs with grandmother.’

‘Mamma says grandmother is such a grand lady, and so cross.’

‘N—o ; she only looks so at first. She is a grand lady, but not cross at all ; on the contrary, she is very kind-hearted and merry. You should have seen the ball she gave on her birthday!’

‘All the same, I am afraid of her ; but then God knows whether we shall . . .’

Katenka was silent once more, and again fell into deep thought.

‘What is the matter?’ asked I anxiously.

‘Nothing particular.’

‘No ? Thou wert saying something : “God knows” . . .’

‘And thou sayest a ball was given by thy grand-mamma?’

‘Yes; it is a pity thou wert not there. There were a great many visitors—about a thousand—a band of musicians, several generals, and I danced . . . Katenka,’ said I, stopping abruptly in the middle of my description; ‘thou art not listening.’

‘Yes, I am; you were saying you danced.’

‘Why are you so sad?’

‘I cannot always be gay.’

‘No; you have changed very much since our arrival from Moscow. Tell me truly,’ added I resolutely, turning towards her, ‘what makes you so strange.’

‘Am I strange?’ replied Katenka with an animation which showed that my remark interested her. ‘I am not strange at all.’

‘No; thou art not the same thou wast before,’ I continued. ‘Formerly thou wert one of us, thou lookedst upon us as relations, and lovedst us, as we love thee; but now thou hast grown so grave, and avoidest us. . . .’

‘Not at all. . . .’

‘No; let me speak out,’ interposed I, beginning to feel a slight tickling in my nose, the forerunner of tears, which always filled my eyes when I expressed any long-suppressed heartfelt thought. ‘Thou shunnest our company, and thou only speakest with Mimi as if thou didst not want to have anything to do with us.’

‘One cannot always remain the same; sometime or other everyone must change,’ replied Katenka, who

always used to ascribe everything to some inevitable fatality when she did not know what else to say.

I remember once, in a quarrel with Lubotchka, who had called her a stupid girl, she had replied: 'Everybody cannot be clever; there must be stupid ones, too.' But the answer that one cannot always remain the same, and that everyone must change sometime, did not satisfy me, and I continued my questions:

'And why should it be so?'

'We shall not always live together,' said Katenka, flushing slightly, and looking fixedly at Philip's back. Mamma could live with your deceased mother, who was her friend; but it is a question whether she will be able to live with the countess, who, they say, is so cross: God knows whether they will agree! Besides, sometime or other we shall have to part; you are rich—Petrovskoje belongs to you—and we are poor—mother has nothing.'

'You are rich, we are poor'; these words, and the meaning attached to them, appeared very strange to me. According to my views at that time, only beggars and peasants could be poor. I could by no means reconcile the idea of poverty with the graceful, pretty Katenka. It seemed to me that Mimi and Katenka, who had lived with us so long, were always to do so, and share all with us. I had thought it could never be otherwise. But now a thousand new undefined thoughts in reference to their lonesome position filled my head, and I felt so ashamed of being rich, while they were poor, that I blushed, and could not make up my mind to look at Katenka.

‘What does it matter that we are rich and they are poor?’ thought I; ‘and why does that make it necessary for us to part? Why should not we share what we possess with them?’ But I instinctively understood that it would not do to say so to Katenka, and a sort of practical instinct, in defiance of these logical deliberations, already told me that she was right, and that it would be out of place to explain my thoughts to her.

‘Dost thou really mean to say that thou wilt leave us?’ said I; ‘how can we live apart?’

‘What is to be done? I am very sorry, too; but when it happens I know what I shall do. . . .’

‘Become an actress . . . what nonsense!’ replied I, knowing that such had always been a favourite dream of hers.

‘No; I talked about that when I was a little girl. . . .’

‘What wilt thou do, then?’

‘I shall enter a convent and live there; shall wear a black dress and a velvet cap.’

Katenka began to cry.

Did you ever happen, dear reader, at any period of life, suddenly to perceive that the aspect under which things appeared to you had undergone a change—that everything you had seen up to that time had suddenly taken a new perfectly unfamiliar appearance? This kind of moral change took place in me for the first time during our journey, and from that time I consider my adolescence to have commenced.

For the first time now I saw clearly that we—that is to say, our family—were not the only beings in the

world, that all the interests of life did not turn upon us alone, but that there existed another life, that of people who had nothing in common with us, who did not care or trouble themselves about us, and that many had not even any idea of our existence. No doubt I had known all that before, but I had not known it as I did now—I had not realized it; I had not felt it.

Thoughts pass into convictions in a peculiar way, often quite unexpectedly and differently from that by which other minds attain the same conviction. My conversation with Katenka, which had affected me deeply, and had made me reflect upon her future position, was what led me to new convictions. When I looked at the villages and towns we passed, in every house of which lived at least one family like ours—at the women, children, who with momentary curiosity glanced at our chaise and then disappeared for ever from our sight—at the shopmen, peasants, who not only did not bow to us, as I was accustomed to see them do at Petrovskoje, but did not even cast a look at us, the question for the first time crossed my mind what it was that occupied their thoughts so that they did not take the least notice of us. And thence arose other questions: how did they live? what did they live on? how did they bring up their children? whether they educated them? whether they let them play? how they punished them? and all kinds of new matters of interest suggested themselves to my awakened mind.

CHAPTER IV.

IN MOSCOW.

WITH our arrival in Moscow the change in my opinions of things and people, and my relations to them, became still more evident to me.

When I first met grandmamma and saw her thin wrinkled face and her dim eyes, the feeling of respect and fear with which I had regarded her changed into compassion; but when, leaning her head on Lubotchka's shoulder, she burst into tears, as if she saw before her eyes the body of her beloved daughter, my compassion even changed into a feeling of love. I did not like to see her so afflicted on seeing us; I was conscious that we were personally nothing in her eyes, that we were dear to her simply by association. I felt that every kiss which she imprinted on my cheeks expressed but one thought—'she is no more! she is dead! I shall never see her more!'

Papa, who in Moscow hardly paid any attention to us, and who, looking care-worn, only came in to dinner, clad in his dress-coat, lost much of his prestige in my eyes; I missed his large shirt-collars, his dressing-gown, his overseer, his clerks, his walks to the threshing-floor, and hunting. Karl Ivanovitch, whom grandmamma used to call our overseer,* and who now (God knows why) had taken it into his head to cover his respectable bald pate with a red wig, with a canvas parting almost in the middle of his head, looked so strange and ridiculous

* A man-nurse.

to me that I was surprised it had never struck me before.

Between the girls and us there also arose an invisible barrier; they had their secrets, as we had ours; just as if they had grown proud of their dresses, which were now longer; and we of our pantaloons with straps. Minnie on the first Sunday came down to dinner in such a fine dress, and with such ribbons in her hair, that it was evident at once that we were not in the country, and that everything was different now.

CHAPTER V.

THE ELDER BROTHER.

I WAS only one year and some months younger than Volodja; we had grown up, studied, and played together. No difference had ever been made between us on account of our ages, but about the time I am speaking of I began to see that Volodja was no companion for me, either in his years, his tastes, or his abilities. It seemed to me even that Volodja felt conscious of his superiority over me, and was proud of it. This conviction (it may be an erroneous one) was inspired by my self-love, which had to suffer every time I came in contact with him. He was in every respect my superior: in our amusements, in our studies, our disputes; and his behaviour separated us and made me experience a mental suffering I could not understand. If, when Volodja began to wear linen shirts with folds, I had said frankly that I was

very much vexed not to have such too, I am sure it would have been a relief to me, and it would not have seemed to me every time he adjusted his collars that he did it on purpose to hurt my feelings.

It seemed to me that Volodja understood me, but tried to conceal it from me, and this was what tormented me most of all.

Who has not noticed those mysterious silent relations betrayed by a scarce perceptible smile, a movement, or a look between persons who constantly live together, between brothers, friends, husband and wife, a master and his servant, especially when such persons are not quite open towards each other? How many unexpressed wishes, thoughts, and what a fear of being understood are expressed in one accidental look, in the timid and irresolute meeting of the eyes!

I was, perhaps, mistaken and deceived by my superabundant sensitiveness and inclination to analyze my impressions. Perhaps Volodja did not at all feel as I did. He was passionate, open-hearted, and fickle. Allured in turns by the most varying subjects, he gave himself up to them, heart and soul.

At one time he would suddenly grow passionately fond of pictures; he would take to drawing, spend all his money on pictures, or beg them of his drawing-master, of papa, or grandmother; then, again, he would get a passion for knickknacks to adorn his writing-table, and collect them from every room in the house; then a passion for novels, which he used to get on the sly, and read day and night. . . . I was involuntarily carried away by his hobbies, but was too

proud to follow in his steps, and too young and dependent to choose a new path for myself. But nothing did I envy so much as Volodja's happy, nobly frank disposition which was especially observable in the disputes which happened to take place between us. I felt that he behaved well, but I was unable to imitate him.

Once, at the time when his passion for ornamental things was at its height, I approached his table, and accidentally broke a little coloured empty scent-bottle.

'Who asked thee to touch my things?' said Volodja, entering the room and noticing the disorder that I had created in the symmetry of the various ornaments on his table; 'and where is the little scent-bottle? Of course thou . . .'

'I dropped it accidentally, and it broke. What harm is there ?

'Have the goodness never to touch my things,' said he, putting together the pieces of the broken bottle and looking at them with regret.

'Pray do not give me any of thy orders,' replied I. 'Well, the thing is broken; what is the use of talking about it?'

And I smiled, although I did not feel in a laughing mood in the least.

'Yes, thou dost not care, but I do,' continued Volodja, shrugging his shoulders, a movement which he had inherited from papa. 'Thou hast broken it, and now thou grinnest, thou nasty little fellow!'

'I am a little fellow; and you are a big fellow, and a stupid one, too.'

'I am not going to quarrel with thee,' said Volodja, pushing me slightly; 'get away.'

'Do not push!'

'Get away.'

'I tell thee not to push!'

Volodja took my hand, and wanted to take me away from the table; but I was beside myself, caught hold of the foot of the table, and knocked it over. 'There now!' and all the china and glass ornaments fell on to the floor with a crash.

'Disgusting fellow! . . .' cried Volodja, trying to prevent the things from falling.

'Now all is over between us,' thought I, leaving the room; 'we have quarrelled for ever.'

We did not speak to each other till the evening. I felt myself in the wrong, was afraid to look at him, and unable to do anything the whole day long. Volodja, on the contrary, did his lessons as well as ever, and after dinner he talked and laughed with the girls as usual.

As soon as the tutor closed our lesson, I left the room, for I felt ashamed to remain in the room alone with my brother. After the evening lesson of history I took my books, and directed my steps towards the door, passing by Volodja. Though I longed to step up to him and make friends, I pouted, and tried to look angry. Volodja at the very same moment raised his head, and with a kind and slightly satirical smile looked straight at me. Our eyes met, and I saw that he understood me, and that he saw I did so; but an irresistible feeling made me turn away.

‘Nicolinka,’ said he simply and not pathetically in the least, ‘come, don’t be cross. Forgive me if I offended you.’ And he offered me his hand.

Something seemed to rise higher and higher from my heart to my throat and choke me ; it lasted but a second ; my eyes filled with tears, and I felt relieved.

‘Forgive . . . m—e, Volo—dja !’ stammered I, freeing his hand.

But Volodja looked at me as if he could by no means make out why my eyes were full of tears. . . .

CHAPTER VI.

MASHA.

BUT none of the changes which took place in my ideas was as striking to myself as that which made me cease to look upon one of our maid-servants as a servant, but begin to see in her a woman, on whom, to a certain extent, my peace and happiness depended.

As far back as I can remember, Masha had always been at our house, and up to the occasion which entirely changed my opinion of her, and which I shall speak of presently, I had never paid the least attention to her. Masha was about five-and-twenty years of age when I was fourteen ; she was very handsome, but I am afraid to describe her, lest my imagination should again present her to me under

the charming and delusive aspect under which she appeared to me at the time of my passion for her. To avoid any mistake of the kind, I will only say that her complexion was wonderfully fair, she was buxom, and was a woman ; and I was fourteen.

During one of those moments when, with book in hand, I used to walk up and down the room, trying to step along some particular chink in the floor, or was singing some stupid song, or daubing the edge of the table with ink, or mechanically repeating some expression out of my book over and over again—in short, during one of those moments when the mind refuses to work, and imagination gets the upper hand and seeks for new impressions—I one day went out of the class-room and descended the stairs to the landing without any definite purpose.

Somebody was coming up the stairs. Of course I was curious to know who it was. Suddenly the steps stopped and were not heard, and Masha's voice said : ' Now then, what are you doing ? Maria Ivanovna may come ; then there will be a fine fuss !'

' She won't come,' said Volodja's voice in a whisper ; and directly afterwards I heard a noise, as if Volodja were trying to stop her.

' Now then, what are you doing with your hands ? For shame !' and Masha ran past me with her kerchief all awry, thus exposing her white, round neck to view.

I cannot describe my amazement at this discovery ; but my surprise soon gave way to sympathy with Volodja. The action itself did not surprise me, but I wondered how he had managed to find out that it was

pleasant to act thus, and I involuntarily longed to imitate him.

I used sometimes to stand for hours on the landing without any thought, with strained attention listening to the least movement upstairs, but I was never able to make up my mind to imitate Volodja, though I longed to do so. Sometimes, concealing myself behind the door, with an awkward feeling of envy and jealousy I heard the romping going on in the maid-servants' room, and the thought would come into my mind, what would my position be if I were to go upstairs and try, like Volodja, to kiss Masha? What should I say, with my broad nose and my sticking-up forelock, if she should ask me what I wanted? I heard Masha say several times to Volodja, 'What a bore! Why do you pester me! Get away, you naughty fellow! . . . Why does Nicolas Petrovitch never come here and behave so foolishly? . . .' She did not know that Nicolas Petrovitch was at that minute sitting at the foot of the stairs, and would have given worlds to take the place of the naughty fellow Volodja.

I was bashful by nature, but my bashfulness was increased by a conviction of my ugliness. I feel convinced that nothing has as powerful an influence upon a man's manners as his outward appearance, and not so much his appearance even as his conviction of its being either attractive or the reverse.

I had too much self-love to be able to get used to my position; I consoled myself by persuading myself, like the fox, that the grapes were sour; that is to say, I tried to despise all the pleasures which were to be

obtained by one who was good-looking—a distinction by which Volodja evidently profited, and which I envied him with all my heart; but yet I strained every nerve of brain and imagination to find pleasure in proud loneliness.

CHAPTER VII.

SMALL-SHOT.

‘GOOD God, gunpowder! . . .’ cried Mimi, in a choked voice of emotion. ‘What are you doing? You will set the house on fire; we shall all perish! . . .’

And with an indescribable expression of resolution, Mimi told all to get out of the way, firmly approached the small-shot that was strewn about, and in spite of the danger which might arise from a sudden explosion, began to stamp upon it. As soon as she conceived all danger to be over, she called Mikej, and told him to remove all the ‘gunpowder’ further away, or, best of all, to throw it into water; and proudly shaking her cap, directed her steps towards the parlour. ‘They are well looked after, to be sure,’ growled she.

When papa came, and we went together with him to grandmother’s room, we found Mimi already sitting by her side, and with a rather mysteriously-important expression, looking past the door. In her hand she held something wrapped up in several papers. I at once guessed it was the small-shot, and that grandmamma already knew everything.

Besides Mimi there were in grandmamma’s room

the servant-maid, Gasha, who, as we could see by her angry, flushed face, was very much disturbed, and Doctor Blumenthal, a short, pockmarked man, who tried in vain to calm Gasha, making mysterious conciliatory signs with his eyes and head.

Grandmamma herself sat aside, laying before her a very dull book, called 'The Traveller'—a certain sign of her being out of humour.

'How do you feel to-day, mamma? Did you sleep well?' said papa, kissing her hand respectfully.

'Very well, my dear. I think, you know, that I am always well,' replied grandmamma, in a tone that seemed to imply that papa's inquiry was an inopportune and disagreeable one. 'Well, are you going to give me a clean handkerchief?' continued she, addressing Gasha.

'I have brought you one,' replied Gasha, pointing to a snowy-white lawn handkerchief which was lying on the arm of the chair.

'Take away that dirty rag, and give me a clean one.'

Gasha went towards the chiffonnier, opened the drawer, and then slammed it so violently that all the windows in the room shook. Grandmamma looked sternly at us, and went on eagerly, watching all the movements of the servant-maid. When the latter handed her, as it seemed to me, the very same handkerchief, grandmamma said:

'When will you grind the tobacco for me?'

'I shall do it when I have time.'

'What do you say?'

'I shall grind it to-day.'

‘If you do not wish to serve me, my dear, you should have said so. I should have dismissed you long ago.’

‘Dismiss me if you like ; I shall not cry about it,’ muttered the servant.

Just then the doctor made her a sign with his eyes, but she looked so angrily and resolutely at him that he instantaneously cast his looks down and began to twirl his watch-key.

‘You see, my dear,’ said grandmamma, addressing herself to papa, when Gasha, still grumbling, left the room, ‘how they speak to me in my own house?’

‘Allow me, mamma ; I will grind the tobacco for you myself,’ said papa, who evidently found himself placed in a very awkward position by this unexpected behaviour.

‘No, thank you ; she is so rude just because she knows there is nobody except her who knows how to grind the tobacco to my taste. Do you know, my dear,’ continued grandmamma, after a minute’s pause, ‘that your children nearly set the house on fire to-day?’

Papa looked respectfully but inquiringly at grandmamma.

‘Yes, that is what they play with. Show him,’ said she, addressing herself to Mimi.

Papa took the small-shot into his hand, and could not suppress a smile.

‘That is shot, mamma,’ said he ; ‘it is quite harmless.’

‘I am very much obliged to you, my dear, for teaching me, but I am too old. . . .’

‘Nerves, nerves!’ whispered the doctor.

And papa immediately turned towards us :

‘Where did you take this? and how dare you play with such things?’

‘There is no need to ask them; their overseer must be asked,’ said grandmother, with a particularly scornful stress on the word ‘overseer’; ‘why does he not look after them?’

Voldemar told me that Karl Ivanovitch himself gave him the “gunpowder,”” said Mimi.

‘There, you see what a nice man he is,’ continued grandmamma; ‘and where is he, the fellow? what is his name?—send him here.’

‘I gave him leave to go and pay a visit,’ said papa.

‘That is not right; he must always be here. The children are not mine, but yours, and I have no right to give you any advice, because you are more clever than I am,’ continued grandmamma; ‘but I think it is time to engage a tutor for them, and not a sort of nurse; a German peasant—and a stupid peasant besides, who is unable to teach them anything except bad manners and Tyrolese songs. Is it very necessary, I ask you, for the children to know how to sing Tyrolese songs? However, now there is nobody to care about it, and you may do whatever you like.’

The word ‘now’ meant that they were now without a mother, and it recalled sad recollections to grandmamma’s mind; she cast her looks down at the snuff-box with the portrait on it, and sank into thought.

‘I have thought of it for some time,’ rejoined papa, ‘and I wished to consult you about it, mamma; should not we invite Mr. St. Jerome, who at present is giving them lessons, to be their tutor?’

‘You could not do better, my friend,’ said grand-mamma, no more in the displeased voice in which she had spoken before. ‘St. Jerome is at least a *gouverneur*, who will know how to manage “des enfants de bonne maison”; he is not an ordinary *menin*, man-nurse, who is only fit to take them out for walks.

‘I will speak to him to-morrow,’ said papa.

And indeed, two days after this conversation, Karl Ivanovitch was replaced by the young elegant Frenchman.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HISTORY OF KARL IVANOVITCH.

LATE in the evening before the day on which Karl Ivanovitch was to leave us for good, he stood in his wadded morning-gown and a red cap beside the bedstead, and bent over a trunk, carefully packing his things.

Karl Ivanovitch’s behaviour of late had been particularly dry and cool. He seemed to avoid any communications with us. And so now, on my entering the room, he looked askance at me, and again turned to his work. I lay down on my bed, but Karl Ivanovitch, who had strictly prohibited this before,

said nothing to me, and the thought that he never would scold us any more, or prevent us from doing what we wished, that now he had nothing to do with us, vividly reminded me of the approaching separation. I grew sad at the idea that he did not love us any more, and I felt anxious to express that feeling to him.

‘Let me assist you, Karl Ivanovitch,’ said I, stepping nearer to him.

Karl Ivanovitch looked at me, and again turned away; but in the glance which he cast upon me I did not see the indifference to which I had attributed his coldness, but sincere pent-up grief.

‘God sees and knows everything, and everything comes by His will,’ said he, raising his body and sighing deeply. ‘Yes, Nicolinka,’ continued he, observing the expression of true sympathy with which I looked at him; ‘it has been my fate to be unhappy from my very infancy, and it will be so till I die. Evil has always been returned me for the good that I have done to people, and my reward is not here, but will come there,’ said he, pointing to heaven. ‘If you knew my history, and all that I have had to go through in life! . . . I have been a bootmaker, I have been a soldier, I have been a deserter, I have been a manufacturer, I have been teacher, and now I am nothing; and, like the Son of God, I have not where to rest my head,’ said he, and, closing his eyes, sat down on his chair.

Seeing that Karl Ivanovitch was in that sentimental state of mind which always made him ignore any listener, and speak out his inmost thoughts

merely for his own satisfaction, I sat down on the bedstead in silence, fixing my eyes on his kind face.

‘You are not a child ; you can understand. I will tell you the story of my life, and all I have had to go through. Some day, children, you will think of your old friend who loved you so dearly.’

Karl Ivanovitch leaned his arm on the small table that stood beside him, took a pinch of snuff, and, turning up his eyes, commenced his story in that peculiarly slow, husky tone in which he usually dictated to us.

As Karl Ivanovitch afterwards told me his story more than once, and every time in exactly the same order, and in the very same words and tone, I think I can repeat it almost word for word ; of course, with the exception of the incorrectness of his speech.* Up to the present time I am not quite sure whether the story was really the history of his own life, or the working of his fancy, created during his lonely life at our house, and which he had at last begun to believe, in consequence of having so frequently repeated it ; or whether he had embellished the real events of his life with various fantastic additions. He told his story so naturally and so methodically that it seemed to bear an impress of truth ; but, on the other hand, there was too much poetical beauty in his narrative, and that excited my doubts as to its veracity. It was as follows :

‘Ill-luck was mine even in my mother’s womb !

* Karl Ivanovitch, being a German, spoke Russian very incorrectly.

I was born six weeks after my mother's marriage. My mother's husband (I called him "papa") was a tenant of Count Sommerblatt. He could not forget my mother's disgrace, and consequently hated me. I had a little brother, named John, and two sisters; but I was a stranger in our family. Whenever John was naughty, papa used to say: "Karl will never give me a moment's peace," and I was scolded and punished. Whenever my sisters quarrelled, papa used to say: "Karl will never be a good, obedient boy," and I was scolded and punished. My dear kind mother was the only being who loved and treated me kindly. She used to say: "Karl, come into my room," and there she would stealthily kiss me. "Poor Karl! poor boy!" she would say, "no one loves thee but myself. Mother asks but one thing of thee—be diligent at thy studies, and be honest, and God will watch over thee." And I tried to obey her. When I was fourteen, and had been confirmed, my mother said to papa: "Karl is a big boy, Gustav: what are we to do for him?" And papa said: "I do not know." Then mamma said: "Let us send him to town, to Mr. Shulz; let him be a bootmaker." And papa said: "Very well." I lived six years and seven months at the bootmaker's, and my master liked me. He used to say: "Karl is a good workman, and shall be my Geselle."* But . . . man proposes, and God disposes. . . . In the year 1796 there was a conscription, and all who were fit for service from the age of seventeen to twenty-one were called.

* Partner,

'Papa and my brother John came up to town, and we were to draw lots for the conscription. John drew a bad number—he was to be a soldier; I drew a good one—I was not to serve. Papa said: "I have an only son, and now I must let him go away from me."

'I took his hand and said: "Why do you say so, dear papa? Come with me; I have something to say to you." So papa followed me. We took our seats at a small table. "Let us have two tankards of beer," said I, and they were brought to us. We drank off a glass each, and my brother John also had one.

"Dear papa," said I, "do not say that you must part with your only son; my heart is ready to burst when I hear you say so. My brother John shall not serve; I will be a soldier. . . . Karl is not wanted by anyone here, and Karl will be a soldier."

"Thou art a fine fellow, Karl Ivanovitch," said my father, embracing me.

'And I became a soldier.'

CHAPTER IX.

KARL IVANOVITCH CONTINUES HIS STORY.

'THAT was a bad time, Nicolinka,' continued Karl Ivanovitch; 'it was the time of Napoleon. He wanted to conquer Germany, and we defended our Fatherland to the last drop of our blood.'

‘I was at Ulm, I was at Austerlitz, I was at Wagram.’

‘And did you fight, too?’ asked I, looking at him with surprise. ‘Did you kill people, too?’

Karl Ivanovitch immediately set my mind at ease on that point.

‘Once a French grenadier, who had been left behind by his comrades, fell down on the road. I ran up to him with my rifle, intending to stab him; but the Frenchman threw his rifle away, and called out, “Pardon,” so I did not touch him.

‘At Wagram Napoleon drove us on to an island and surrounded us, so that there was no escape. For three days we had no provisions, and stood in the water up to our knees, and that wicked Napoleon would neither take us nor let us go free.

‘On the fourth day, thank God! we were taken and carried off to the fortress. I had blue pantaloons on, and a fine cloth uniform, fifteen thalers in cash, and a silver watch—a present from my father. A French soldier took all away from me. I fortunately remained in possession of three ducats which my mother had sewn in the lining of my vest. They were not found.

‘I did not want to remain long in the fortress, and resolved to flee. Once, on a great holiday, I said to our sergeant on guard: “Sir, it is a great holiday to-day; I should like to keep it. Bring two bottles of madeira, and let us take a glass each.” The sergeant said: “Very well.” When he had brought it, and we had each taken a glass, I seized his hand

and said: "Sir, perhaps you have a father and mother still living?" He said: "Yes, I have, Mr. Mauer. My father and mother have not seen me for the last eight years, and do not even know if I am still alive, or if my bones have not long ago been laid in the cold earth." "Oh, sir! I have two pieces of gold concealed in my vest; take them, and let me go. Be my benefactor, and my mother will pray for you all the rest of her life."

'The sergeant drank off his glass of madeira and said: "Mr. Mauer, I have grown fond of you, and I pity you; but you are a prisoner, and I am a soldier." I shook his hand and said, "Sergeant."

'And the sergeant said: "You are a poor man, and I shall not take your money, but I shall help you. When I go to bed, buy some brandy for the soldiers, and they will all sleep soundly. I shall not watch."

'He was a kind-hearted man. I bought some brandy, and when the soldiers were all tipsy, I put on my boots, my old overcoat, and crept stealthily out of doors. I went up the embankment, intending to spring down; there was a moat round it, and I did not want to spoil the only clothes I had, so I went towards the gate.

'The sentinel, who was marching up and down, saw me. "Qui vive?" exclaimed he suddenly. I was silent. "Qui vive? sagte er zum zweiten Mal. Qui vive?" said he for the third time, and I fled. I dashed into the water, reached the opposite bank, and fled.

‘During the whole of the night I ran along the highroad, but when day dawned I was afraid of being recognised, and concealed myself in a field of rye. There I fell down on my knees, clasped my hands, thanked God Almighty for my safety, and then fell into a peaceful sleep.

‘I awoke towards evening, and went on my way. At last I was overtaken by a large German waggon, drawn by two black horses. In the waggon sat a well-dressed man smoking a pipe ; he looked at me. I walked on at a slower pace, that the waggon might drive past, but the slower I walked, the slower did the waggon advance, the man still looking at me. I walked on faster ; the waggon advanced faster, too, the man still looking at me. I sat down by the wayside ; the man stopped his horses. “Young man,” said he, “where are you going so late at night?” I said : “I am going to Frankfurt.” “Get into my waggon ; there will be room enough, and I will take you there. But how is it you have nothing with you, and why is your beard not shaven, and your clothes all dirty?” said he, when I had taken a seat near him. “I am a poor man,” I said ; “I want to find work in some manufactory, and my clothes are dirty because I happened to fall as I was going along.” “That is a falsehood, young man,” said he ; “the road is dry.”

‘I did not answer.

‘“Tell me the truth,” said the good man, “who are you? and where do you come from? I like your looks, and if you are an honest man, I will help you.”

‘Then I told him all. He said: “Very well, young man, come with me to my manufactory. I will give you work, clothes, money, and you shall live at my house.”

‘And I said: “Very well.”

‘We came to a rope-manufactory, and the kind man said to his wife: “Here is a young man who has fought in defence of his native land, and who has escaped from captivity; he has no home, no clothes, no food. He shall bide with us. Give him some clean linen and something to eat.”

‘I lived a year and a half at the rope-manufactory, and my master grew so fond of me that he would not let me go away.

‘And I was happy there. I was then a handsome man. I was young, tall, had blue eyes, and a Roman nose, and Mrs. L. (I cannot mention her name) was a young and pretty woman. She loved me.

‘One day she said to me: “Mr. Mauer, by what name did your mother call you?” “Karlchen,”* said I.

‘Then she said: “Karlchen, come and sit down near me.”

‘I did so, and she said: “Karlchen, kiss me.”

‘I gave her a kiss, and she said: “Karlchen, I love you; I can conceal it no longer,” and began to tremble.’

At this point of his narrative Karl Ivanovitch paused, and looking upwards with his kind blue eyes, sat shaking his head slightly and smiling, as

* Charlie.

people smile under the influence of some particularly pleasant reminiscence.

‘Yes,’ continued he, seating himself more comfortably in his easy-chair, and wrapping himself up closer in his morning-gown ; ‘there has been plenty of both good and bad in my life, but here is my witness,’ added he, pointing to a picture of our Saviour, embroidered in worsted, which hung over his bed : ‘nobody can say that Karl Ivanovitch was ever a dishonourable man. I did not choose to repay all Mr. L.’s kindness with base ingratitude, and I resolved to flee. In the evening when all were in bed, I wrote a letter to my master, left it on my table, took some clothes, three thalers, and stealthily left the house. Nobody saw me, and I walked away along the highroad.’

CHAPTER X.

KARL IVANOVITCH CONTINUES HIS STORY.

‘I HAD not seen my mother for nine years, and did not know whether she was yet alive, or whether she had already been laid in the cold damp earth, so I turned homewards. When I entered the town, I asked where Gustav Mauer, who had rented land of Count Sommerblatt, lived. I was told that Count Sommerblatt was dead, and that Gustav Mauer lived in one of the large thoroughfares of the town, and kept a shop of “liqueurs.” I put on my new waist-coat, a good coat that had been given me, as a present,

by my former master, the manufacturer, brushed my hair, and went into my father's shop. My sister Mary was sitting in the shop, and asked me what I wanted. I said: "I will thank you for a small glass of liqueur." And she called out: "Father, here is a young man who wants a glass of liqueur," and my father said: "Give the young man one." I sat down at a small table, drank my liqueur, lighted my pipe, looked at papa, Mary, and John, who had all come into the shop. In the course of conversation papa said to me: "I suppose, young man, that you know where our army is at present?" I said: "I have just come from the army; it is near Vienna." "Our son," said papa, "is a soldier, and we have had no news of him for upwards of nine years; we do not know whether he is alive or dead. My wife does nothing but cry. . . ." I went on smoking my pipe, and said: "What was your son's name? In what regiment was he? I know him, perhaps." "His name is Karl Mauer, and he is in the Austrian Jägers," answered my father: "He is a tall, handsome man, like you," said my sister Mary. "I know your Karl," said I. "Amalie," exclaimed my father, "come here! Here is a young man who knows our Karl." And my dear mother came out of the next room. I knew her immediately. "Do you know our Karl?" said she, and I dared not raise my eyes to hers; my heart was ready to burst. "My Karl is alive!" cried mother; "thanks be to God! Where is he? where is my dear Karl? I should die in peace if I could but see my darling son once more. It is not God's will that it should be so," added she, bursting into tears. I could keep silence

no longer. "Mamma," I cried, "I am your Karl!" and she fell into my arms.'

Karl Ivanovitch closed his eyes, and his lip quivered.

'"Mutter!" cried I—"ich bin ihr Sohn, ich bin ihr Karl!" und sie sturzte mir in die Arme,' repeated he, wiping away the large tears that rolled down his cheeks.

'But it was not the will of God that I should end my days in my native land. I was fated to be unfortunate in life! I spent but three months at home. One Sunday I was sitting in a café, with a mug of beer before me, smoking my pipe, and talking politics with some friends about the Emperor Franz, Napoleon, the war, each of us freely emitting his own opinion. At another table, not far from us, sat a stranger in a gray overcoat. He sat drinking his coffee, and smoking his pipe, without uttering a word. When the "Nachtwächter" called out that it was ten o'clock, I took my hat, paid for my beer, and went home. At midnight there was a loud knocking at the door of our house. I awoke, and called out: "Who is there?" "Open! Macht auf!" I called out: "Tell me who you are, and I will open the door." "Macht auf im Namen des Gesetzes!" said a voice. So I opened the door. Two soldiers, with bayonets in their hands, stood outside; and the stranger in the gray overcoat, who had sat next to us in the coffee-house, entered the room. He was a spy! You must come with me," said the spy. "Very well," said I. I put on my clothes, walking up and down the room all the time. My blood was up. I said to myself: "He is a

villain!" When I came up to the wall on which hung my sword, I seized it, and said: "Thou art a spy; defend thyself!" Ich gab ein Hieb to the right, ein Hieb to the left, and one on his head. The spy fell! I snatched up my portmanteau, my money, and sprang out of the window. I came to Ems, and there I made the acquaintance of General Sazin. He liked my looks, got me a passport from the ambassador, and took me with him to Russia as teacher to his children. When General Sazin died, your mamma asked me to come to her house. She said to me: "Karl Ivanovitch, I entrust my children to you; love them, and I shall never forsake you, but shall provide for you in your old age." Now she is no more, and all is forgotten. After my twenty-five years' service, I must go and beg in the streets for a bit of dry bread. God sees it all; His holy will be done; but it grieves me to part from you, children,' added Karl Ivanovitch, drawing me towards him, and pressing a kiss on my forehead.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BAD MARK.

TOWARDS the close of the year of mourning my grandmother recovered a little from the blow that had well-nigh struck her down, and began to receive a few visitors, mostly children of our age.

On Lubotchka's birthday, the 13th of December, Princess Kornakoff came before dinner, with her

daughter, Mrs. Valahoff with Sonitchka, Illiinka Grap, and the two younger of the Ivins.

Sounds of voices talking and laughing, and of the servants running to and fro, reached our ears from downstairs, where all the company was assembled; but we could not go down to join them till we had finished our morning studies. On a placard, which hung in the class-room, stood the words: 'Lundi, 2—3, maître d'histoire et de géographie;' and so we had to wait for the coming of that same 'maître d'histoire,' in order to finish our lessons with him before we were free to go down. It was already twenty minutes past two, and the master had not yet made his appearance, neither could we see him coming up the street, down which I stared with a great longing never to see his face any more.

'Lebedeff is not coming to-day, it seems,' said Volodja, glancing up from Smaragdoff,* which he had been conning.

'I hope he is not coming. I hope not . . . I do not know a single word of my lesson . . . There he is, after all,' added I, a moment after, in a melancholy tone.

Volodja got up and approached the window.

'No, that is not he; that is a *gentleman*,' said he. 'Let us wait till half-past two,' added he, stretching himself and scratching the back of his head, his usual habit, when resting after his studies. 'If he is not here by half-past two, we may tell St. Jerome to put away our copybooks.'

'What in the world is the use of his coming?'

* A class-book on history.

said I, stretching myself likewise, and shaking Kaidanoff's 'Rudiments of History' over my head with both hands.

Having nothing better to do, I opened the book at the page I had to learn, and began to read it over. It was a long lesson, and a difficult one I did not know at all, and soon saw that I should not be able to get it into my head in so short a time, the more so as I was in that fretful state of mind which prevents one's thoughts from resting long upon any subject.

At the preceding lesson of history (a lesson which always seemed a most tedious, uninteresting one to me) Lebedeff had complained of me to St. Jerome, and had given me 'two,' which was considered a very bad mark. St. Jerome had told me that if I got less than 'three' at the next lesson I should be punished. This was the next lesson, and I was, I must confess, in an awful fright.

I was so taken up with reading over my lesson, that the sound of footsteps and the taking off of galoches in the anteroom took me by surprise. I had barely time to glance round, when the hateful scarred face of the master, the clumsy figure, so familiar to me, in the dark-blue, close-fitting coat, with its 'learned buttons,'* appeared in the doorway.

The master leisurely put his hat on the window-sill, the copybooks on the table, and, turning aside the skirts of his coat with both hands, sat down, puffing and blowing.

* Teachers in public schools wear a sort of uniform, with gilt buttons.

‘Well, gentlemen,’ said he, rubbing his clammy hands, ‘let us first see what we talked about last time, and I shall then acquaint you with the subsequent events of the Middle Ages.’

This meant : ‘Now, answer your lesson.’

While Volodja answered with the ease and assurance of one who knows what he has to say, I walked out aimlessly to the staircase, and as I dared not go down, I naturally soon found myself on the landing-place at the top of the stairs. But just as I was going to settle down in my usual post of observation, behind the door, Mimi, who was always the cause of every misadventure that befell me, found me out.

‘You here!’ said she, looking sternly at me, then at the door of the maid-servants’ room, then at me once more.

I felt like a culprit—in the first place because I was not in the schoolroom, and then because I had been found in a place where I had no business to be. I was silent, and looked down—a picture of abject remorse.

‘Now, that is too bad!’ cried Mimi. ‘What are you here for?’ No answer. ‘No, I shall not let the matter drop,’ continued she, rapping the balustrade with her knuckles. ‘I shall tell the countess.’

It was already five minutes to three when I re-entered the schoolroom. The master was explaining the lesson for the next time, and looked as if he neither noticed my absence nor my presence.

When he had done he began putting the books aside, while Volodja went into the next room for a

ticket, and I was overjoyed at the thought that all was over, and he had forgotten to ask me my lesson.

All at once the master turned to me with a malignant smile.

'I hope you know your lesson, young gentleman,' said he, rubbing his hands.

'I have learnt it, sir,' answered I.

'Well, then, tell me something about the Crusade of Louis le Saint,' said he, balancing himself on his chair, and looking at his feet. 'You will first tell me the reasons which induced the French king to begin the Crusade,' said he, raising his eyebrows and passing his finger across the inkstand; 'then you will explain the general characteristics of that period,' here he made a motion with his wrist, as if he were catching something; 'then speak of the influence of that Crusade upon Europe in general,' continued he, striking the left side of the table with a copybook, 'especially the influence it exercised over France,' concluded he, tapping the right side of the table and inclining his head to the right at the same time.

I cleared my throat several times, coughed, cast down my eyes, and stood before him in silence. Then taking up a quill-pen that lay on the table, began to pull it to pieces without uttering a word.

'Let me have that pen, pray,' said the master, stretching out his hand for it; 'it may be of use to me. Well?'

'Lou . . . Car . . . Louis le Saint was . . . was . . . was . . . a good and wise czar.'

'What was he?'

‘A czar. He went to Jerusalem, and left the management of his kingdom to his mother.’

‘What was her name?’

‘Bl . . . Blan . . . Blank . . .’

‘What do you say? Boulianka?’*

I smiled—a constrained, awkward smile.

‘Well, do you know anything else about it?’ said he, with a grin.

I saw that I was lost. Clearing my throat, I went on at random, saying whatever happened to come into my head. The master listened in silence, sweeping the dust off the table with the quill-pen he had taken out of my hands, looking fixedly at me, and only saying every now and then, ‘Well, sir,’ ‘Very well,’ ‘Indeed, sir!’ I was perfectly aware that I knew nothing, that I was not saying what I ought to have said, and I was greatly abashed to find that the master neither interrupted nor corrected me.

‘And what induced him to go to Jerusalem?’ asked he at last, repeating the words I had just used.

‘Because . . . because . . . on account of . . .’

I was quite unable to continue—did not utter a word more, and felt that if that hard-hearted master were to go on sitting and staring inquiringly at me for a whole year, I should not be able to say a single word all the time.

The master looked at me for a minute or two, then assuming a look of concern said, in a feeling tone to Volodja, who just then entered the room :

‘Pray give me the mark-book.’

* A name given to horses in Russia.

Volodja brought it, and carefully placed the 'cachet' beside it.

The master opened the mark-book, and deliberately dipping the pen in the ink, put Volodja down a 'five' for his lesson.

Then with the pen suspended over the place where my name stood, he looked up at me, shook the pen, and seemed thoughtful.

Suddenly his hand made an almost imperceptible motion, and opposite my name there stood an elegantly-shaped 'one,' with a full-stop after it; a second motion of the hand, and there stood a second 'one,' with a full-stop after it, for behaviour.

After having carefully closed the book, the master rose and went towards the door, regardless of the look of despair, entreaty, and reproach that I turned upon him.

'Michael Larionovitch!' cried I.

'No,' said he, guessing what I was going to say; 'it is impossible to learn as you do. I cannot take money for nothing.'

The master put on his galoches, his overcoat, and carefully wrapped a comforter round his throat. As if it was possible to think of anything else after what had happened to me! It was but a stroke of the pen for him; but for me it was the greatest misfortune possible.

'Is the lesson over?' asked St. Jerome, coming into the room.

'Yes.'

'Was the master satisfied with you?'

'Yes,' said Volodja.

‘What mark have you got?’

‘A “five.”’

‘And Nicholas?’

I was silent.

‘I think he has a “four,”’ said Volodja.

He knew it was absolutely necessary to save me; for that day, at least. Let them punish me afterwards, but not just the day there were visitors at the house.

‘Voyons, messieurs’ (St. Jerome was in the habit of prefacing all he said with ‘voyons’); ‘faites votre toilette et descendons.’

CHAPTER XII.

THE KEY.

NO sooner had we greeted the assembled guests, on entering the drawing-room, than dinner was announced.

Papa was in high spirits—he had been winning largely at cards—and gave Lubotchka a valuable silver tea-service. At dinner-time he suddenly recollected that there was, besides that, a box of bonbons in his room for the birthday queen.

‘I should not like to send the servant; go thou, Coco,’ said he to me. ‘The keys are in the shell that is on my table. Take them, and with the largest key open the second drawer to the right. There thou will find a small box and a packet of bonbons; bring them all here.’

‘Am I to bring thee any cigars?’ asked I, for I knew he always sent for them after dinner.

‘Yes, do ; and mind thou dost not touch anything,’ added he, as I was leaving the room.

Having found the keys just where he had told me, I was about to open the drawer, when it occurred to me that I should like to know for what purpose a tiny key, which was lying amongst the rest, was used.

Amidst a heterogeneous mass of things on the table, I perceived an embroidered portfolio with a little padlock attached to it, and I thought I would try if the tiny key would not unlock it.

I was right in my conjecture, opened the portfolio, and found a heap of papers in it. Curiosity prompted me so powerfully to find out what there was in those papers that I had no time to listen to the voice of conscience, and began to examine the contents of the portfolio. . . .

My childlike feeling of reverence for all my elders, and especially for papa, was so strong, that my mind unconsciously refused to draw any conclusions whatever from what I had found out. I felt as if papa lived in a different world, in which there was something beautiful, inaccessible, and utterly beyond my comprehension, and that for me to try and fathom the secrets of his life would be almost sacrilegious.

That is why the discovery I made, almost accidentally, on opening papa’s portfolio, was but imperfectly comprehended by me, and left me but the unpleasant consciousness of having done very wrong. I felt both ashamed and embarrassed.

Under the influence of that feeling I hastily closed the portfolio, but I was fated to meet with all sorts of misfortunes on that memorable day. Putting the key into the keyhole, I turned it the wrong way ;

supposing it to be locked, I took out the key, and, oh terror! the upper part of the key alone was in my hand. It was in vain that I tried to join it to the other half, left in the keyhole, and to get it out in some wonderful way or other. I was at last obliged to acknowledge to myself that I had committed a second misdemeanour, which would come to light the same day, as soon as ever papa returned to his room.

Complaints of me from Mimi; a bad mark; and a broken key! Nothing worse could ever have happened. Grandmother would scold me on hearing Mimi's complaints; St. Jerome for the 'one'; and papa for the key . . . and all was to be burst over my head no later than that same evening.

'What is to become of me? Oh! what have I done!' said I aloud, walking up and down the soft carpet. 'Well,' added I, getting out the bonbons and the cigars, 'what is to be will be,' and ran back to the drawing-room.

The preceding fatalistic saying, overheard by me in my childhood from our man-servant, Nicolas, ever afterwards exercised a beneficial, temporarily soothing influence upon me in every crisis of my life. When I came into the hall I was in an unnatural, excited, but very merry, state of mind.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRAITRESS.

AFTER dinner we played at 'petits jeux,' and I took an active part in them. While playing at blindman's-buff, I was so awkward as to jostle the governess of

the Kornakoffs, who was playing with us; then I inadvertently stepped upon her gown and tore it. Having noticed that all the little girls who were present, and especially Sonitchka, looked gleefully at the discomfiture of the governess as she went into the maid's room to get her dress mended, I resolved to amuse them in the same way once more. The result of that amiable resolution was that as soon as the governess returned, I began to dance round her, and continued my pranks till I managed to catch the heel of my boot in the skirt of her dress once more, and tore it again. Sonitchka and the little princesses were bursting with laughter, and I felt very proud of my exploit; but St. Jerome, having noticed it too, came up to me, and knitting his brows (a thing I hated to see), said that my gaiety boded no good, and that if I did not behave better, he would make me repent, in spite of its being a holiday.

I was in the excited state of mind of a man who, having lost at cards more than he has in his pocket, fears to cast up his accounts, and plays on desperately, without any hope of winning back what he has lost, only in order to banish thought. I turned on my heel with an insolent laugh.

After having played at blindman's-buff some time, a game called 'Lange Nase' was proposed. It consisted in placing two rows of chairs, one opposite the other, and the ladies and gentlemen of the party, divided into separate groups, chose each other by turns.

The youngest princess always chose Ivin the younger; Katenka's choice generally fell either upon

Volodja or Illiinka, and Sonitchka's upon Serge ; nor did she seem in the least abashed when Serge went confidently straight up to her, and took a seat opposite her. She laughed her pleasant, merry laugh every time, and only nodded, as a sign that he had guessed right. Nobody ever chose me. My self-love was bitterly wounded to find that nobody wanted me ; that I was the one left behind ; that they used to say : ' Who is there left ? Oh yes, there is Nicholas ; well, then, take him.' So, when my turn came, I always went up either to my sister, or to one of the ugly princesses, and, unfortunately, I was never mistaken. Sonitchka seemed to be so taken up with Serge Ivin, that she hardly noticed my existence. I do not know on what grounds I mentally called her a traitress, for she had never promised to choose me and not Serge, yet I felt fully persuaded that she had treated me very badly indeed.

When the play was over I noticed that the *traitress*, whom I despised, yet off whom I could, nevertheless, never keep my eyes, had gone into a corner of the room with Serge and Katenka, and that they were engaged in a mysterious whispering conversation. Creeping stealthily up to them in order to find out what the secret was, I saw that Katenka was holding up a fine cambric handkerchief by both ends, in lieu of a screen, thus concealing the heads of Serge and Sonitchka from view.

' Well, you see you have lost the wager, so you must pay,' said Serge.

Sonitchka stood before him like a culprit, and said with a blush :

‘No, I have not lost the wager, have I, Catherine?’

‘I cannot tell a lie,’ answered Katenka; ‘you have lost, *ma chère*.’

Hardly were the words out of her mouth, when Serge bent his head and kissed Sonitchka. Kissed her ruby lips! And Sonitchka laughed, as if she was not in the least put out, as if she found it very pleasant to be kissed. Dreadful! Oh, wicked, wicked traitress!

CHAPTER XIV.

I GROW WILD.

I NOW felt that I despised the whole female sex, and Sonitchka in particular. I persuaded myself that these games were not nice at all, only fit for little girls, and I longed to play some boisterous trick, some wild prank which would astonish everybody. An opportunity soon presented itself.

St. Jerome had been talking with Mimi, and I now saw him rise and walk out of the room; I heard his steps going up the stairs; then they sounded above our heads, in the direction of the schoolroom. I supposed Mimi had been telling him where she had seen me standing during the lesson-hour that morning, and that he had gone up to see the mark-book. At that time it seemed to me that St. Jerome could have no other interest in life but that of punishing me. I have read somewhere, that children between twelve and fourteen years of age—that is, in the transition stage from childhood to adolescence—are especially apt to become murderers or incendiaries.

When I recall my own adolescence, and the state of mind I was in on that unfortunate day, I can understand the incentive to the most dreadful crimes committed without aim or purpose, without any precise desire to harm others—done simply out of curiosity, out of an unconscious need of action. There are moments when the future seems so gloomy that one fears to look forward to it; when the mind works no more, and one tries to persuade one's self that there will be no future, and that there has been no past. At such a moment, when the will is not governed or modified by reflection, and the mainsprings of life are but carnal instincts, I can understand how a child, a being especially prone to fall into such a state on account of his inexperience of life, will wantonly, and without the least hesitation or fear, with a smile of curiosity, set fire to the house in which his brothers and sisters, his father and mother, all of whom he loves dearly, are sleeping. Under the influence of a similar absence of thought, absence of mind almost, a country clown of seventeen, examining the edge of a sharp axe lying near the bench on which his old father lies asleep, will suddenly raise the axe and look on, with dull curiosity, while the blood oozes under the bench, from the cut throat of the old man. Under the influence of a similar absence of all thought, out of instinctive curiosity, a man finds pleasure in standing on the very brink of a precipice, and thinks: 'Why should I not fling myself down?' or, raising a loaded pistol to his forehead, says to himself: 'Shall I not pull the trigger?' Or, again, looking at some grand personage whom all

treat with servile respect, he will say to himself: 'Why should I not go up to him, pull his nose, and say, "Well, old fellow, come along"?'

I was exactly in such a state of unthinking excitement when St. Jerome came down and told me I had no business to be downstairs that day, having both learnt and behaved badly at my lesson; he ordered me to go upstairs immediately, upon which I thrust out my tongue, and answered that I would not go.

At first St. Jerome stared at me in speechless astonishment and anger.

'C'est bien,' said he at last; 'I have promised to punish you more than once already, but your grand-mamma has always begged you off; but I see that nothing will teach you obedience except a good whipping, and to-day you have amply deserved one.'

He spoke in a loud, audible voice. The blood rushed forcibly to my heart; I felt it beat wildly; I felt that my cheek grew pale and my lips trembled. My looks must have been frightful at that moment, for St. Jerome, avoiding my gaze, approached me hastily and seized me by the arm. When I felt his hand touch me I was beside myself, and, as soon as I could release my arm from his grasp, struck him with all my strength.

'What is the matter with thee?' said Volodja, coming up and looking at me with mingled surprise and terror.

'Leave me!' cried I, in a voice half choked with sobs. 'You none of you love me—none of you understand how miserable I am. You are all nasty,

disgusting creatures!' added I wildly, addressing all present.

St. Jerome, his face firm and pale, once more came up to me, and before I had time to take any defensive measures, seized both my hands as in a vice, and dragged me away. I was quite dizzy from passion. I only remember that I struggled desperately as long as I had any strength to do so; I remember that I struck my nose several times against somebody's thighs; that the skirts of somebody's coat was between my teeth; that I heard the sound of footsteps and inhaled a smell of dust mingled with that of 'violette,' the perfume used by St. Jerome.

Five minutes after I heard the garret door locked upon me.

'Basil,' said he in a malignant, triumphant voice, 'bring me a rod. . . .'

CHAPTER XV.

CASTLES IN THE AIR.

COULD I have believed that I should survive the misery of that day, that a time would ever come when I should be able to recall it calmly?

Thinking over all I had done, I could not even imagine what was to become of me, but had a dim consciousness that I was lost for ever.

At first all was perfectly still around me, or at least it seemed so to me, after the violent agitation I had undergone; but by degrees I began to distinguish various sounds. I heard Basil come upstairs and

throw something that sounded like a bunch of dry twigs on to the window-sill, then lie down on the bench, with a yawn. The loud voice of Augustus Antonovitch* talking about me, no doubt, might be heard; then childish voices, laughter, and people running to and fro, and in a few minutes all seemed to be going on as usual, as if nobody either knew or cared about my being shut up in a dark garret.

I was not crying now, but felt a heavy weight, like a stone, on my heart. All sorts of thoughts and fancies whirled through my brain; but the remembrance of the misfortune that had befallen me interrupted their erratic course, and I fell once more into a labyrinth of conjectures as to the fate which was in store for me.

I thought to myself that there must be some reason, unknown to myself, why everybody disliked, nay, hated, me.

At that time I felt perfectly convinced that all—from grandmother to Philip the coachman—hated me, and rejoiced in my misery.

‘I am, perhaps, not the son of my father and mother, not Volodja’s brother, but a poor orphan, a foundling, taken in out of charity,’ said I to myself; and the ridiculous notion seemed not only a consoling supposition, but a very probable one. It was consoling to think that I was miserable, not through any fault of mine, but because I was fated to be miserable from the day of my birth, and that my destiny was like that of Karl Ivanovitch.

‘But why do they keep it from me, when I have

* St. Jerome.

already fathomed the mystery?’ said I to myself. ‘I shall go to papa to-morrow, and shall say to him: “Papa, it is useless for thee to try and conceal from me the secret of my birth. I know all.” He will answer: “Well, my boy, thou must have learnt it sooner or later—thou art not my son—I have adopted thee, and if thou art worthy of my affection I shall never cast thee away.” And I shall say: “Papa, I have no right to call thee by that name—I do so for the last time; I have always loved thee, shall always love thee; thou art my benefactor, and I shall never forget thee; but I cannot stay in thy house any longer. Nobody loves me, and St. Jerome has vowed my ruin. Either he or I must leave thy house, for I cannot answer for myself; I hate the man; I shall kill him. Yes, that is what I will say: I shall kill him.” Papa will try to remonstrate, but with a wave of my hand I shall say: “No, my friend, my benefactor, we cannot live together any longer; let me go away;” and then I shall put my arms round his neck and say, in French: “Oh, mon père! oh, mon bienfaiteur, donne moi pour la dernière fois la bénédiction, et que la volonté de Dieu soit faite!”’ And sitting on a trunk, in the dark garret, I sob aloud at the thought. Then I suddenly remember the ignominious punishment in store for me, the present is once more before me in its true colours, and my day-dreams fade away.

Then again I fancy myself free, away from home. I am a hussar, and go to the war. I am surrounded by the enemy; with one wave of my sword I kill one, another, a third. At last, exhausted and wounded, I fall, crying: ‘Victory!’ The general rides up and

asks: 'Where is he that has saved us?' I am pointed out to him; he embraces me with tears in his eyes, and repeats the cry of 'Victory.' I recover, and walk up and down the Tverskoi boulevard with my arm in a sling. I am a general! And now the emperor meets me and asks: 'Who is that young man?' He is told that it is the great hero, Nicholas. The emperor comes up to me and says: 'I thank thee. Ask of me what thou wilt, and it shall be granted thee.' I bow respectfully, and, leaning on my sabre, say: 'Your majesty, I am happy to have shed my blood for my native land; I would die for it. But if it be thy gracious will to grant my request, let me entreat but one favour of thee—give me leave to slay a foe of mine, a foreigner, St. Jerome by name. I long to annihilate my foe, St. Jerome.' I stand sternly before St. Jerome, and say: 'Thou art the cause of all my misery! A genoux!' And then the idea occurs to me that the real St. Jerome may enter the room at any moment with a rod in his hand, and I am no longer a general who has saved his fatherland, but a most abject, pitiable being.

I begin to think of God, and wonder why He punishes me thus. I have never forgotten to say my prayers, either morning or evening; why is such misery mine? I may confidently assert that the first step towards the doubts concerning religion, which assailed me in my adolescence, were engendered in me at that moment of my life, not because I was then led on to murmur against my fate, but because the idea of the injustice of Providence, which took possession of my mind during that period of mental suffer-

ing, grew apace like a seed falling into the damp earth and rapidly taking root. Then it occurred to me that I was going to die, and I drew a lively picture of St. Jerome's stupefaction on coming in and finding me a corpse. I remembered what Natalia Savishna had once told me about the souls of the departed hovering during forty days around the spots in which they had dwelt during life; and I hovered, in thought, over all the rooms in grandmother's house, seeing Lubotchka's bitter tears, grandmother's grief, and overhearing in imagination papa's conversation with St. Jerome. 'He was a good boy,' papa will say, with tears in his eyes. 'Yes,' St. Jerome will answer, 'he was; but very wild.' 'Respect the memory of the dead, pray,' papa will then say; 'you were the cause of his death. You terrified him; he could not submit to the indignity you threatened him with. Begone, you wretch!'

And St. Jerome will go down on his knees sobbing, and beg to be forgiven. After forty days my soul goes up to heaven. I see something wonderfully beautiful, all white and transparent, and I feel that it is my mother. The undefined white substance surrounds me, caresses me; but I am restless, and am not quite sure that it is she. 'If thou art mother, let me see thee better, that I may embrace thee.' And it is her voice that answers: 'We are all thus here; I cannot embrace thee closer. Art thou not happy thus?' 'I am, but thou canst not touch me; I cannot kiss thy hands. . . .' 'That is needless; all is joy here,' says she; and I feel that all is truly joy here, and we soar up together, higher and higher. Here I

awake as from a dream, and find myself again on the trunk, in the dark garret, my cheeks wet with tears, mechanically repeating the words, 'and we soar higher and higher.' I try my utmost to see my present position clearly, but my mental gaze can only see something dimly terrible looming before me. I endeavour to recall those sweet, happy dreams which had driven away all consciousness of the present ; but, to my surprise, I find that I cannot take up the broken thread again, and, strangely enough, find no pleasure in them any longer.

CHAPTER XVI.

ALL WILL COME RIGHT AT LAST.

I PASSED the night in the garret, and nobody came near me ; but on the next day, which was Sunday, I was taken into a small room, next to the school-room, and shut up there. I began to hope that my punishment would be limited to confinement for some days ; after a sound, invigorating sleep, and under the influence of the bright sunshine on the patterns made by the hoar-frost on the window-panes, and the noise in the streets, I began to feel calmer. Nevertheless, I found my solitude very irksome. I longed to move about ; to talk to somebody about the thoughts that filled my mind, and there was not a living soul near me. What aggravated me still more was hearing St. Jerome walking up and down his room, calmly whistling a lively tune. I felt fully persuaded that he had not the least inclination to

whistle, and did so solely for the purpose of torturing me.

At two o'clock St. Jerome and Volodja went downstairs, and Nicolas brought me up my dinner. When I began to speak to him about what I had done, and wondered what was to be done to me, he said :

‘Oh, master, never mind ; all will come right at last.’

Though that saying, which even in after-years has often kept up my spirits, comforted me a little, the fact that the whole dinner, even the last dish, consisting of dumplings, had been sent up to me, instead of the bread and water I had expected, puzzled me not a little. If no dumplings had been sent me, it would have been a proof that my captivity was my punishment ; now it looked as if I was not punished yet, but only kept away from the others, as being too wicked to associate with them, and that my punishment was yet to come. While I was revolving the question in my mind, the key of my prison door was turned, and St. Jerome entered the room.

‘Come with me to your grandmamma,’ said he, without looking at me.

I was about to clean the sleeve of my jacket, which was smeared with chalk, before leaving the room ; but St. Jerome told me that it was quite useless for me to do so, as if I were in such a pitiable moral condition that any care about my outward appearance was useless.

Katenka, Lubotchka and Volodja all glanced at me, as St. Jerome led me through the room, holding my arm in exactly the same way as the criminals were

held whom we used to see taken past our windows on Mondays. When I approached grandmother's chair, in order to kiss her hand, she turned away from me and hid her hand under her mantilla.

'Yes, my dear,' said she, after a prolonged silence, during which she had looked at me from head to foot in such a way that I did not know what to do with my eyes and hands, 'you set great store on my affection for you, and are a comfort to me, I must say. Mr. St. Jerome, who consented, at my request,' added she, with emphasis, 'to take your education upon himself, now refuses to stay here. Why? Because of you. I hoped you would be grateful,' continued she, after a pause, and in a tone which showed that her speech had been prepared beforehand—'grateful for his care and his trouble, that you would know how to appreciate his worth, and instead of that you—a milksop, a mere boy—dared raise your hand against him! Very fine! I begin to think that you are incapable of understanding gentlemanly treatment; that other, ruder measures must be adopted. Beg his pardon immediately,' added she sternly and imperatively, pointing to St. Jerome, 'dost thou hear?'

I looked in the direction of grandmother's finger, and catching a glimpse of St. Jerome's coat, turned away and stood quite still, with a sinking heart.

'Well, dost thou not hear what I say?'

My whole body trembled, but I did not stir.

'Coco!' said grandmother, who must have noticed the mental suffering I endured; 'Coco,' repeated she in a kinder, less imperative tone, 'is it thou indeed!'

‘Grandmamma, I shall not beg his pardon! No, I shall not . . .’ cried I, suddenly stopping short, for I felt that I should be unable to restrain the tears which choked my utterance, if I tried to speak another word.

‘I order thee to do so—nay, I ask thee to do so. Well?’

‘I . . . I . . . will . . . not—I cannot!’ said I, and the sobs so long pent up in my breast suddenly burst all bounds, and found vent in a flood of despairing tears.

‘C’est ainsi que vous obéissez à votre seconde mère; c’est ainsi que vous reconnaissez ses bontés,’ said St. Jerome in a tragic tone. ‘A genoux!’

‘O God! if she could see this!’ said grandmother, turning aside and wiping away the starting tears. ‘If she had seen . . . all is for the best—she could never have survived a shock like this—she would never have survived it!’

And grandmother wept bitterly; my tears flowed likewise, but I never thought of begging pardon.

‘Tranquillisez-vous, au nom du ciel, Madame la Comtesse,’ said St. Jerome.

But grandmother did not hear him; she had covered her face with both hands, and her sobs soon turned into gasps and hysterics. Mimi and Gasha came running in with frightened looks; there was a strong smell of ether; steps running to and fro and low whispering voices were audible all over the house.

‘That’s all your doing,’ said St. Jerome, marching me upstairs.

O God, what have I done? What an awful criminal I am!

As soon as St. Jerome had gone down again, after having told me to go back to my room, I rushed down the wide staircase which led into the street, hardly conscious of what I was doing.

I do not remember if I wanted to run away from home, to throw myself into the river, or what I wanted to do. I only know that, covering my face with both hands, so that I could see nothing, I ran wildly down the stairs.

‘Where art thou going?’ asked a well-known voice suddenly. ‘I want thee, my fine fellow.’

I was about to rush past him, but papa caught hold of my arm, and said sternly :

‘Come here, sirrah! Who gave thee leave to meddle with the portfolio in my study?’ and with these words he led me into the little parlour. ‘Well, what hast thou to say for thyself? Eh?’ added he, taking hold of my ear.

‘Forgive me,’ said I ; ‘I do not know what possessed me to do so.’

‘Oh, indeed! thou dost not know what possessed thee—thou dost not know—dost thou?’ repeated he, pulling my ear at each word ; ‘wilt thou again poke thy nose where thou hast no business to poke it—thou wilt, wilt thou?’

In spite of the violent pain I did not cry, but experienced a sensation of moral relief. No sooner had my father let go my ear, than I seized his hand, and, bursting into a torrent of tears, covered it with kisses.

‘What is the matter with thee?’ asked he, slightly pushing me aside,

‘No, no, I will not go,’ said I, catching hold of his coat. ‘Everybody hates me, I know, but for God’s sake hear me! Defend me, or drive me out of the house. I cannot live with *him*—*he* is always trying to humiliate me—orders me to go down on my knees before him; *he* wants to flog me. I cannot bear that; I am not a child. I shall not survive it—I shall die—I shall kill myself! *He* told grandmamma that I was a good-for-nothing fellow—now she is ill—I shall have been the cause of her death. I . . . with him . . . for God’s sake, flog me . . . why do they torture . . . me?’

Tears choked my utterance; I sat down on the sofa, and, unable to utter another word, laid my head on his knees, sobbing so violently that it seemed to me I was about to die that instant.

‘What art thou crying about, thou bubble?’ said papa kindly, stooping over me.

‘He is my tyrant . . . my tormentor . . . I shall die . . . nobody loves me!’ I uttered with difficulty, and fell down in a fit.

Papa took me up in his arms and carried me to my bedroom. I was soon fast asleep.

When I awoke it was already late; a single candle was burning near my bed, and in the room sat the family doctor, Mimi, and Lubotchka. I could see by their faces that fears for my health were entertained. But I felt so well, my heart felt so light after my twelve hours’ sleep, that I could have sprung out of bed immediately if I had not been restrained by the fear of destroying their conviction that I was very ill.

CHAPTER XVII.

HATRED.

YES, it was real hatred ; not the hatred we read of in novels, and which I do not believe in—a hatred which finds delight in harming another—but the hatred which fills you with abhorrence of a man who at one time had your esteem, and which makes you hate the very sight of his hair, his neck, his gait, the sound of his voice, his whole person, every movement of his, and at the same time attracts you in some unaccountable way, and makes you watch his slightest gesture. Such were my feelings towards St. Jerome.

St. Jerome had been with us a year and a half. Now, when I can judge the character of the man calmly, I find that he was a good man, but a true Frenchman. He was not wanting in cleverness, was pretty well informed, and did his duty by us conscientiously ; but he possessed the distinctive traits peculiar to all his countrymen, which are so contrary to the character of the Russians—he was thoughtless, selfish, full of vanity, arrogance, and self-sufficiency. I disliked all this. Grandmother had, of course, imparted her opinions to him concerning corporal punishment, and he dared not beat us ; nevertheless, he often threatened us, and me especially, with the rod, and pronounced the word *fouetter* (somewhat like *fouàtter*) in a way I hated, and in a tone which seemed to say that to flog me would be the greatest pleasure in life to him.

I did not, indeed, fear the pain of punishment in the

least ; I did not even know what it was ; but the bare idea of St. Jerome's daring to strike me threw me into a state of concentrated rage and despair.

Karl Ivanovitch, in a moment of ill-humour, used sometimes to make us feel his ruler or his braces, but the remembrance of that excites no feeling of anger in my breast. Even at the period I am now speaking about (when I was fourteen), if Karl Ivanovitch had chanced to beat me, I should have taken the beating very coolly. I loved Karl Ivanovitch—could remember him ever since I remembered myself—and considered him as one of the family ; but St. Jerome was a proud, self-sufficient man, for whom I had never experienced any feeling but that involuntary respect which I felt for all 'grown-up people.' Karl Ivanovitch was a funny old man, a 'diadka' whom I loved, but whom I nevertheless, in my childish comprehension, considered my inferior in social position.

St. Jerome, on the contrary, was a well-bred, handsome young fop, who endeavoured to be on terms of equality with all.

Karl Ivanovitch was never in a passion when he punished us ; he evidently considered it as a necessary but unpleasant duty. St. Jerome, on the contrary, liked to show off his tutorship ; when he punished us, he seemed to do so rather for his own pleasure than for our good. He was full of his own importance. His high-flown French phrases, which he pronounced with great emphasis on the last syllable, with circumflex accents, were my antipathy.

When Karl Ivanovitch was angry, he used to say : A puppet-show—mischievous urchin !' St. Jerome

would call me 'Mauvais sujet,' 'Vilain garnement,' and such like appellations, which stung me to the quick.

Karl Ivanovitch used to make us kneel down, with our faces turned to the wall, and the punishment lay in the physical pain caused by the uncomfortable posture. St. Jerome would stick out his chest, and with a stately gesture would exclaim, in a tragic tone: 'A genoux, mauvais sujet!' and would make us kneel with our faces turned towards him and beg his pardon. The punishment lay in the degradation.

I was not punished, and no mention was made of what had occurred, but I could not forget what I had suffered—the despair, the shame, the fear, and the hatred of the last two days. Though from that time St. Jerome seemed to have washed his hands of me, and hardly took any notice of me, I could not look at him with any degree of calmness. Every time our eyes chanced to meet, I felt as if my glance expressed my dislike too plainly, and I hastily put on an air of indifference; then, again, fancying he must see through the feint, I would blush and turn away.

In a word, it was unbearably hard for me to have anything to do with him.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MAID-SERVANTS' ROOM.

I FELT more and more lonely, and my greatest pleasure was to give way to solitary reflection and contemplation. I shall speak of the subjects I reflected

upon in my next chapter; the theatre of my contemplations was principally the maid-servants' room, where a very touching romance was just then going on, and I took great interest in it. The heroine was, of course, Masha. She was in love with Vassily, who had been a friend of hers when she lived at her father's, and who had then asked her to marry him. Fate, which had parted them five years ago, had reunited them at grandmother's house, but had raised a barrier between them in the person of Nicolas, Masha's uncle, who would not hear of his niece's marrying Vassily, whom he called a 'worthless, boisterous fellow.'

The obstacle thus placed in their way made Vassily, who up to that time had been tolerably cool and off-hand in his treatment of Masha, fall as passionately in love with her as only a tailor serf in a pink shirt, and with well-oiled hair, is capable of doing.

Though the outpourings of his love were most odd and grotesque (for instance, if he met Masha he would always endeavour to hurt her in some way, either pinching or slapping her, or squeezing her so hard that she would scarcely breathe), he really did love her, as was proved by the fact that no sooner had Nicolas decidedly refused his consent to their marriage, than Vassily had taken to drinking hard, from grief, began to loiter about in ale-houses, to be so recklessly boisterous that he was more than once sentenced to corporal punishment at the police-office. But all his misdemeanours and their consequences only seemed to enhance his merit in the opinion of Masha, and served to make her love him more than ever.

When Vassily was locked up in the watch-house, Masha would weep bitterly all day, complain of her hard fate to Gasha (who took a lively interest in the unfortunate lovers), and, heedless of her uncle's scoldings and the many beatings he gave her, would run stealthily to the watch-house to see her lover.

Reader, do not despise the society into which I bring thee. If the chords of love and affection have not yet been weakened in thy heart, there will be sounds even in the maid-servants' room to which it will respond. Let me step on to the landing-place at the head of the staircase, whence I can see all that goes on in the maid-servants' room. There is the 'lejanka,'* on which there stand an iron, a pasteboard doll with a broken nose, a slop-pail, a basin ; there is the window, on which I can see a small piece of black wax, a skein of silk, a green cucumber, half of which has been bitten off, and an old pasteboard-box which had once contained bonbons ; there is the large red table, on which lies some unfinished work, pinned by one end to a bright pincushion, covered with cotton-print, and at it Masha sits in her favourite pink gingham gown, and in a blue kerchief, which especially attracts my attention. She is sewing, stopping every now and then to scratch her head with her needle, or to trim the candle ; and as I look on I think in my heart, 'Why was she not born a lady, with those bright blue eyes, thick chestnut tresses, and buxom shape?' How nice she would look, sitting in the best

* A part of the oven which projects, forming a sort of ledge about three feet from the ground ; sometimes used by the domestics as a bed in cold weather.

parlour, a cap with pink ribbons on her head, in a dark-red silk morning-gown, not like the one Mimi usually wears, but like one I had once seen a lady wear on the Tverskoi boulevard. She should sit at her embroidery-frame, and I would sit looking at her face, reflected in the mirror. I should do whatever she pleased—I would do everything for her—would hold her cloak, hand her food. . . .

What a tipsy face and what a disgusting figure Vassily has, in his narrow coat (put on over a dirty pink shirt), which hangs down to his knees! In every movement he makes, in every curve of his back, I fancy I see traces of the ignominious punishments he has undergone.

‘Well, Vassily, again?’ said Masha to him, without raising her head to greet his entrance.

‘What of that? What is one to expect of *him*?’ answered Vassily. ‘If he could make up his mind one way or another, at least. I am going to the dogs, and all through him.’

‘Have a cup of tea?’ said Nadeja, another of the housemaids.

‘Thanks; and why does that old thief, thy uncle, hate me? Because I wear good clothes, because of my “style,” my gait; in a word . . . Oh, oh!’ concluded Vassily with a wave of his hand.

‘We must submit,’ said Masha, biting off a thread, ‘and you . . .’

‘It is beyond me, that’s what it is.’

Just then grandmother’s door opened, and the grumbling voice of Gasha was heard as she came up the stairs.

‘There’s no pleasing one who does not know herself what she wants. . . . It’s a cursed life ; no better than a galley-slave’s. . . . God forgive me!’ muttered she.

‘My respects to you, Agatha Mihailovna,’ said Vassily, rising as she entered.

‘Get along with you, all of you ! Be off with thy respect !’ said she, with a menacing look. ‘What dost thou come here for ? What business have men to come and see girls ? . . .’

‘I came to inquire about your health,’ said Vassily bashfully.

‘I shall soon be dead ; that is how the matter stands !’ cried Agatha Mihailovna, still more angrily.

Vassily laughed.

‘It is no laughing matter, and if I tell thee to be off, march ! A beastly fellow like thee to be thinking of marriage, forsooth—a rogue ! March off in double-quick time !’

And Agatha Mihailovna, stamping her foot at him, went off into her room, slamming the door so violently that all the windows shook.

She might be heard, a long time afterwards, scolding all and everybody, cursing her own life, flinging her things about, and pulling her pet cat’s ears ; at last the door was partially opened, and the poor cat, mewling piteously, was flung out by the tail.

‘I suppose I had better come some other day to have tea with thee,’ whispered Vassily.

‘Never mind her,’ said Nadeja, winking at him ; ‘I will go and set the tea-urn.’

‘I shall put an end to all,’ continued Vassily, sitting

down closer to Masha as soon as Nadeja had left the room. I shall either go straight to the Countess myself, and shall say so and so . . . or else . . . I shall throw up all, and go off to the other end of the world, by God! . . .'

'And how shall I remain here? . . .'

'I am sorry for thee; if I had not been sorry, I should long, long ago have been free, by God!'

'Why dost thou not bring me thy shirts to be washed?' said Masha, after a moment's pause. 'See how dirty this one is,' added she, taking hold of his shirt-collar.

Just then grandmother's bell was heard downstairs, and Gasha came out of her room.

'Thou low fellow! what dost thou want with her?' said she, pushing Vassily, who had risen hastily at her entrance, towards the door. 'Thou hast brought the girl to a pretty pass, and now here thou art again. It seems thou likest to see her tears, thou good-for-nothing! Be off! don't let me see thee here any more! And what in the world hast thou found in him, to make thee care for him?' continued she, turning to Masha. 'Thou hast not been beaten enough by thy uncle on account of him. Always the same story: I will not marry any other than Vassily Gouskoff. Thou art a fool, girl!'

'And I shall never marry any other; I love him alone. You may beat me to death for it,' retorted Masha, suddenly bursting into tears.

I stood a long time looking at Masha, who lay on her trunk wiping away her tears with her neckerchief; while endeavouring to alter my estimate

of Vassily, I tried to find out the point of view under which he seemed so attractive to Masha. But though I sympathized sincerely with her in her sorrow, I could not possibly understand how such a bewitching creature as Masha seemed to me to be could love a man like Vassily.

‘When I grow up,’ said I to myself, as I went upstairs to my room, ‘Petrovskoje will be mine, and Vassily and Masha will be *my* serfs. I shall be sitting in my study smoking a pipe, and Masha will pass by with an iron in her hand, on her way to the kitchen. I shall call her; she will come, and we shall be alone in the room. All at once Vassily will come in, and, seeing Masha there, will cry: “I am undone!” and Masha will begin to cry too, and I shall say: “Vassily, I know that thou lovest her, and she loves thee; here are a thousand roubles for thee; marry her, and may God bless thee!” and with these words I shall go into the parlour.’

Amidst the countless thoughts and fancies, many of which pass through our brain without leaving any traces behind, there are some which do leave deep and sensitive furrows in our hearts; so that it often happens that though you do not exactly recall the idea, you remember that a good thought did pass through your mind—you feel its traces, and long to call it up once more. A similar impression has ever since remained in my mind of the wish I then experienced to sacrifice my own feelings for the sake of Masha, whose happiness could only be secured by her marriage with Vassily.

CHAPTER XIX.

MY BOYHOOD.

MY readers will hardly believe me when I tell them what were the favourite and ever-recurring subjects of meditation of my boyhood, they were so little in accordance with my age and position. I think, however, that the discrepancy between the position of a man and his mental activity is the surest sign of truth.

For the space of a whole year, during which I led a solitary moral life, concentrated in myself, various abstract questions concerning the destination of man, the next world, the immortality of the soul, had presented themselves to my mind, and my weak, childish intellect had tried, with all the eagerness of inexperience, to understand all those problems which form the highest point to which the mind of man can attain, but which the power to solve has not been given him.

I think that the mind of each man, in the course of its development, follows the same course as the development of whole generations; that the ideas which form the basis of various philosophical theories are inseparable particles of the mind, and that each man has been more or less conscious of them even before knowing anything about the existence of philosophical theories.

These ideas presented themselves to my mind so clearly and forcibly, that I endeavoured to apply

them to life, fancying that I was the first to discover such important and useful truths.

At one time it occurred to me that happiness did not depend on outward causes, but upon the way we considered them ; that a man who had grown used to suffering could never more be truly miserable ; and in order to get myself inured to labour, I used to hold Tatischeff's Dictionaries in my outstretched hand for five minutes, or I would go into the closet, and scourge my bare back with a rope so severely that the tears would flow down my cheeks.

Another time, when it suddenly occurred to me that death is always at hand, every hour, every minute of our lives, I came to the conclusion that a man could only be happy by profiting by the present, without reflecting upon the future ; I wondered the idea had never occurred to anyone, and for three whole days, acting under its influence, cast all my lessons aside, and spent my time in lying on my bed enjoying the pleasure of reading a novel, and eating gingerbread bought with the last money which I possessed.

Once, while standing before the blackboard and drawing various figures upon it, the thought suddenly struck me : ' Why is symmetry agreeable to the eye ? What is symmetry ? It is innate, was my answer. What is it grounded upon ? Is everything symmetrical in life ? On the contrary. This is life ;' and I drew an oval figure on the board. ' After life the soul passes into eternity. This is eternity ;' and I drew on one side of the oval figure a long line to the end of the board. ' Why is there no such line on the

other side? And, in fact, what eternity can there be if it is only on one side? We must have existed before this life, though we have lost all remembrance of it.'

The idea, which seemed a very novel and clear one to me, and the thread of which I can hardly follow now, pleased me very much indeed, and taking a sheet of paper, I thought I would put it all down in writing; but at the very outset so many ideas crowded into my head, that I was obliged to rise and walk up and down the room. When I came up to the window my glance fell upon the dray-horse that the coachman was just putting to a cart, and my attention was entirely absorbed in solving the question: into the body of what man or animal would the soul of the horse enter, after its death? Just at that moment Volodja passed through the room, and smiled as he saw me standing in deep thought, and the smile alone sufficed to make me feel that I had been building up but a rotten edifice in my mind.

I mention this last circumstance, which has somehow or other remained in my memory, only in order to give my reader some idea of the habit of mental philosophizing into which I had fallen at that period of my life.

There was, however, no point of philosophical argument which had as great a hold of me as scepticism, which at one time brought me almost to the verge of madness. I imagined that nobody and nothing but myself really existed in the world; that the objects before me were not real, but only images rising before me, when I turned my attention

towards them, and that I had no sooner ceased to think of them than they vanished. In a word, I came to the same conclusion as Schelling, that things did not really exist, except as I myself gave them being in my own mind. There were moments when, under the influence of that constant idea, I attained such a point of insanity that I used sometimes to turn hastily round and glance in some opposite direction, expecting to find nothingness (*néant*) there where I was not.

What a pitiful, worthless spring of moral activity is the mind of man!

My weak mind could not penetrate the impenetrable, and in work beyond its strength lost, one after the other, all those convictions which, for the happiness of my life, I ought never to have touched.

All this hard moral labour has left me nothing but a wavering mind, which has weakened the force of my will, and a habit of constant moral analysis which has annihilated the freshness of my feelings and the clearness of my reason.

Abstract speculations are the result of the aptitude of man to seize, by intuition, at a given moment, the actual state of his mind, and always to be able to carry his thoughts back to it.

My fondness for a meditation on abstract questions developed my meditative faculties to such a degree that I used, on thinking of the simplest thing, to fall into a maze, analyzing my own thoughts, and entirely losing sight of the question which had occupied my thoughts at the outset. Asking myself: 'What am I thinking of?' I would answer myself thus: 'I am

thinking what it was that I was thinking of. And now what am I thinking of? I am thinking that I am thinking what it was that I was thinking of, and so on.' My mind was going astray.

However, the philosophical discoveries I had made greatly flattered my self-love. I would fancy myself some great man who had discovered new truths for the good of humanity, and with a proud consciousness of my merits, would look down contemptuously upon all other mortals; yet I felt strangely bashful whenever I had anything to do with these same mortals, and the higher I placed myself in my own opinion, the less capable I was of parading that consciousness of my own merits. I could not even avoid feeling ashamed of every word or gesture of my own, even the very simplest. a m

CHAPTER XX.

VOLODJA.

THE further I proceed in my description of this period of my life, the harder and more difficult it becomes. I seldom, very seldom find, in my remembrances of the past, any traces of those true, warm feelings which had so brightly and so constantly cast a lustre on my early years. I involuntarily long to pass rapidly over the desert of my boyhood, and to come to that happy time when the warm, noble sentiment of friendship cast its bright light over the last year of my boyhood, and laid the foundation of

the new period of youth, so full of poetry and charm.

I shall not follow my recollections closely, but shall throw a rapid glance over the more important points between the time to which I have brought my narrative and my friendship with an extraordinary man, who had a decisive and beneficial influence on my disposition.

Volodja is to enter the university in a few days ; several masters come to give him private lessons, and I listen, with mingled envy and respect, when, boldly striking the blackboard with a bit of chalk, he talks glibly of functions, sines, co-ordinates, etc., which all seem to me to be expressions of unattainable wisdom and knowledge. And now, one Sunday after dinner, all the masters assemble in grandmother's room ; there are two professors there likewise, and in the presence of papa and several guests there is a rehearsal of the university examination, at which, to grandmother's delight, Volodja gives proofs of extraordinary information. I am also questioned ; am found to know very little, and the professors evidently try to conceal my ignorance from grandmother, and that makes me still more ashamed of myself. However, little attention is paid to me. I am only fifteen, and have therefore a whole year before me. Volodja only comes down for dinner, and spends whole days, and even the evenings, upstairs at his studies, not because he is ordered to do so, but of his own free will. He is full of self-love, and wishes to undergo his examination, not only creditably, but perfectly well.

At last comes the day of his first examination. Volodja puts on a dark-blue coat with bronze buttons, a gold watch and varnished boots ; papa's phaeton is brought to the door, Nicolas throws aside the cover, and Volodja and St. Jerome drive off to the university. The girls, with joyful, excited faces, look out of the window at the slender figure of Volodja, as he gets into the phaeton ; papa says : ' God grant he may succeed ! ' and grandmother, who has also managed to crawl to the window, with her eyes full of tears, makes the sign of the cross over his receding figure, muttering some inaudible words, until the phaeton disappears behind the corner of the street.

Volodja returns. All eagerly ask : ' Well ? What ? Did it go off well ? What mark have they put ? ' But his joyous looks show clearly that all is well. He has a ' five.' The next day he departs with the same fears, and the same good wishes for his success, and is received on his return with the same joy. Nine days pass thus. On the tenth day is the last examination—the most difficult one of all—that on theology, and we all stand at the window, waiting for his return, with greater impatience than ever.

' O God ! oh dear ! oh dear ! there they are ! there they are ! ' cries Lubotchka, with her face pressed close to the window-pane.

And indeed there is Volodja sitting in the phaeton, with St. Jerome ; but he is not in his dark-blue coat and gray cap now, but in a student's uniform, with a blue embroidered collar, in a three-cornered hat, and with a sword by his side.

' Oh, if *thou* wert but alive ! ' cries grandmother, on seeing Volodja in his uniform, and faints away.

Volodja comes running into the outer hall, with a beaming face, kisses and embraces me, Lubotchka, Mimi, and Katenka, who blushes to the tips of her ears. Volodja is beside himself with joy. And how nice he looks in his uniform! How well the blue collar suits his incipient black moustache! What a long, slender waist he has, and how gracefully he walks! On that memorable day we all dine in grandmother's room; all faces are bright and joyous, and while we are eating the last dish the butler comes in with a respectfully pompous, pleased look, bringing a bottle of champagne, wrapped round with a napkin. Grandmother takes a glass of champagne for the first time after mother's death, drinks off the whole of it, wishing Volodja joy, and again shedding tears of happiness as she looks at him. Volodja drives out alone, in his own equipage, receives his friends in his own room, smokes, goes to balls; and I once saw him, with my own eyes, drink two bottles of champagne with his friends, in his own room. I heard them drink each glass to the health of some mysterious personages, and quarrel as to who was to get 'le fond de la bouteille.' He dines at home, however, every day, and after dinner sits with us as usual, in the parlour, carrying on a mysterious conversation with Katenka. As far as I could make out, for I took no part in their conversation, they talked about the heroes and heroines of the novels they had read, about jealousy, love, and I could by no means understand what interest they could find in such conversations, and why they both smiled so knowingly, and argued so warmly.

I notice that besides the friendship natural between young people who have been brought up together, there are other and strange ties between them, which remove them further from us, and link them together in some mysterious way.

CHAPTER XXI.

KATENKA AND LUBOTCHKA.

KATENKA is sixteen; she has grown taller; the angular figure, the shyness and awkwardness usual to girls, just growing out of childhood, have given place to the harmonious freshness and grace of a new-blown flower, but otherwise she is not changed. The same light-blue eyes and smiling glance; the same straight nose with firm nostrils, which is almost on a line with the forehead; the little mouth with its bright smile; the same tiny dimples on her pink, transparent-looking cheeks; the same white hands; . . . and, as formerly, the term 'a clean little girl' seems to suit her remarkably well. She now wears her thick brown hair in some grown-up fashion, and is fast developing into a woman.

Though she and Lubotchka have grown up together and have been brought up alike, the latter is a very different sort of girl.

Lubotchka is not tall, and as she had the rickets in her childhood, she has bandy legs and an ugly figure. Her one beauty is her eyes, which are really beautiful; they are large, black, and have such a lovely expression of mingled dignity and frankness

that they attract everybody's attention. Lubotchka is simple and unaffected ; Katenka always looks as if she were trying to be like somebody else. Lubotchka always looks everyone straight in the face, and will sometimes sit staring at people with her great black eyes till she is reprimanded for doing so, and reminded that it is very rude. Katenka, on the contrary, screws up her eyes, telling us that she is short-sighted, though I know that her eyesight is very good. Lubotchka does not like to show off before strangers, and if any of us kiss her in the presence of strangers, she will pout and say that she hates such fondling. Katenka, on the contrary, is always especially loving with Mimi before visitors, and likes to walk up and down the room with her arm round some other girl's waist. Lubotchka is a good laugh, and will sometimes, in a fit of merriment, toss up her arms and run up and down the room. Katenka will cover her mouth with her pocket-handkerchief or her hands when she laughs. Lubotchka always sits bolt upright, and walks with her arms hanging down by her sides. Katenka holds her head a little on one side, and folds her arms when she walks. Lubotchka is very fond of conversing with grown-up gentlemen, and says she will absolutely marry a hussar. Katenka says she dislikes all men, that she will never marry, and looks queer, as if she were afraid of something, when any gentleman talks to her. Lubotchka is always displeased with Mimi for making her wear tight stays ; she says she cannot breathe in them, and is fond of eating. Katenka, on the contrary, will often put her finger under the bodice of her dress to show us that it is

too wide for her, and eats very little. Lubotchka likes to draw heads ; Katenka draws only flowers and butterflies. Lubotchka plays Field's concertos very accurately, as well as some of Beethoven's sonatas. Katenka plays variations and waltzes, does not keep good time, hammers, uses the pedal continually, and, before beginning to play any piece, runs her fingers over the keys, and makes a grand flourish.

But Katenka seems to me to be more like a grown-up young lady, and therefore pleases me better.

CHAPTER XXII.

PAPA.

PAPA has been more cheerful than usual since Volodja entered the university, and comes oftener to dine at grandmother's. However, I have heard from Nicolas that his good spirits are the result of his having won largely at cards. Sometimes, before going to the club, he comes to our house, sits down to the piano and sings gipsy songs, keeping time by tapping the floor with his soft boot (he cannot bear high-heeled boots, and never wears them). And you should have seen the delight of his pet, Lubotchka, who, in her turn, almost worships him. Sometimes he will come into the class-room, and, with a stern look, listen to me as I answer my lesson ; but I soon notice, by the few words he utters in order to rectify any mistake I may make, that he knows but little of the matter himself. Sometimes he winks slyly, and makes signs to us with his hand, when grandmother begins to

grumble and to be angry with us without any cause. 'We have caught it, children,' he will say. In general, he gradually descends, in my eyes, from the lofty height upon which my imagination had placed him. I kiss his large white hand with the same sincere love and respect, but I allow myself to think of him, to criticise his actions, and many ideas concerning him involuntarily occur to me, which I am almost afraid of harbouring. I shall never forget one circumstance which awoke many such feelings in me, and caused me great moral suffering.

Late one evening he came into the drawing-room in a black dress-coat and white waistcoat, in order to take Volodja, who was yet in his own room, dressing, to a ball. Grandmother was waiting in her bedroom for Volodja to come and show himself to her. (She always used to call him into her room before he went to a ball, in order to see how he looked, to admonish him concerning his behaviour, and to give him her blessing.) Mimi and Katenka were walking up and down the hall, which was lighted by a single lamp; and Lubotchka was at the piano, learning to play the second concerto of Field, mamma's favourite piece of music.

I have never seen such a family likeness as there was between my sister and my mother. The resemblance lay neither in the face nor in the figure, but in some intangible likeness in the hands, in the way of walking, in the tones of her voice, and in certain expressions she used. When Lubotchka was vexed and said, 'They keep us waiting a whole age,' the words 'a whole age,' which mamma had^d also been in

the habit of using, were pronounced by her in a way that forcibly reminded us of mamma's slow way of saying a wh-o-le a-ge.' But at no time was the resemblance as striking as when she sat at her piano; the way she took her seat, smoothing down the folds of her dress in exactly the same manner; turning the pages from the top with her left hand. When vexed at her inability to master some difficult passage, she would strike the keys with her fist, and cry, 'Oh dear!' in exactly the same tone. There was the same softness and accuracy in her method of playing; it was that beautiful method taught by Field, and which has justly been styled 'jeu perle,' whose charm all the juggling trickery of modern pianists can never efface from our memories.

Papa came into the room briskly and went up to Lubotchka, who left off playing on seeing him.

'Go on playing, Luba; go on,' said he, making her sit down again; 'thou knowest how I like to hear thee play.'

Lubotchka went on playing, and papa sat opposite her for a long time leaning on his elbow; then, twitching his shoulders, he rose and began to walk up and down the room. Every time he came near the piano, he stopped and looked fixedly at Lubotchka. I could notice by his movements, and by the way he walked up and down the room, that he was in a state of nervous excitement. After several turns he stopped behind Lubotchka's chair, kissed her black head, and then, turning hastily away, recommenced his walk. When Lubotchka had finished she went up to him, asking: 'Did I play it well?'

He did not answer, but taking her head with both hands, kissed her forehead and her eyes with a tenderness I had never before seen him exhibit.

‘Oh, thou art weeping!’ said Lubotchka, suddenly letting go his watch-chain, and fixing her large eyes on him with surprise. Forgive me, dearest papa; I had forgotten that it was mamma’s favourite piece.’

‘No, my love, play it often,’ said he, in a voice trembling with emotion; ‘if thou but knewest what a comfort it is for me to weep with thee!’

He kissed her once more; then, with an effort to overcome his emotion, left the room by the door that opened on the corridor leading to Volodja’s room.

‘Voldemar, wilt thou be soon ready?’ cried he, stopping in the middle of the corridor. The maid-servant Masha, who happened to be passing just at that moment, stopped on seeing the ‘barin’* standing there, cast down her eyes, and was going to make a circuit in order to avoid passing close to him, when he stopped her with the words:

‘And thou art getting prettier than ever,’ and stooped towards her.

Masha grew very red, and bent her head still lower.

‘Allow me to pass,’ murmured she.

‘Well, Volodja, wilt thou soon be ready?’ repeated papa, coughing slightly as Masha passed on, and he caught sight of me.

I love my father; but the mind and the heart of man are independent of each other, and the former

* ‘Master’ in English; in Russian, ‘barin.’

often harbours thoughts which wound the heart, and which seem strangely harsh. And similar thoughts occur to me, though I try hard to drive them away.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GRANDMOTHER.

GRANDMOTHER grows weaker from day to day. The sound of her bell, the grumbling voice of Gasha, and the opening and shutting of doors are heard more frequently in her room; she does not receive us in her study now, sitting in her easy-chair, as she used to do, but in her bedroom, lying on a high bed, the pillows of which are trimmed with lace. When I wish her good-morning, I notice the pale, yellowish swelling of her hands, and there is the same heavy odour in her room that I had smelt five years ago in mother's chamber. The doctor comes to see her two or three times a day, and there have been several consultations. But neither her disposition nor her haughty, formal manner towards the whole household has undergone any alteration; she drawls out her words as much as ever, raises her eyebrows, and says: 'My dear.'*

And now we have not been allowed to see her for several days, and St. Jerome, during lesson hours, proposes to me to take a drive, with Katenka and Lubotchka.

* This was not so much a term of endearment, when used without the name of the person addressed, as of conscious superiority.

Though I notice, as we get into the sledge, that the street before grandmother's window is strewn with straw,* and that some men in dark-blue jerkins are standing near our gates, I cannot possibly imagine why we are sent out for a drive at such an unwonted hour. On that day, and during the whole time of our drive, Lubotchka and I are in that merry mood in which every simple circumstance, every word, every movement, excite laughter.

A pedlar, catching hold of his board, trots quickly across the road, and we burst out laughing. A ragged 'vanka'† overtakes our sledge, pulling at the reins and urging his horse to a gallop, and we laugh again. Philip's whip gets caught in the sledge-apron; turning round he says: 'Oh me!' and we burst into a fit of laughter once more. Mimi looks displeased, and says that it is only silly people that laugh thus, without any reason, and Lubotchka, with her face quite red from the effort she makes to keep her merriment within due bounds, glances stealthily at me. Our eyes meet, and we give way to such a burst of homeric laughter, that our eyes are full of tears, and we can no longer restrain ourselves without running the risk of choking. No sooner have we grown a little calmer than I glance at Lubotchka and utter a certain word which has been in vogue amongst us for some time, and off we are again.

As we drive up to the house, I open my mouth to

* This is done in cases of severe illness, in order to soften the noise of the passing vehicles.

† An inferior kind of cabman, called *vanka* from the diminutive of Ivan, a very frequent name amongst the lower classes.

make a face at Lubotchka, when I am thunderstruck at seeing the black lid of a coffin placed against one side of the house-door, and my mouth remains motionless with the ugly grimace upon it.

‘Votre grandmère est morte!’ says St. Jerome, coming out to meet us with a very pale face.

All the time grandmother’s body is in the house I am under a heavy feeling of the fear of death ; that is, the dead body reminds me unpleasantly that I shall have to die, too, some day ; it is a feeling that we somehow or other often mistake for grief. I do not regret grandmother ; indeed, hardly anybody did. Though the house is full of visitors in mourning, nobody mourns for her, except one, whose excessive grief surprises me greatly. It is her maid-servant, Gasha. She goes up to the garret, locks herself up there, cries without intermission, curses herself, tears her hair, is deaf to all remonstrance, and says that death is the only consolation left her, after the loss of her beloved mistress.

I repeat once more that incongruity in matters of feeling is the surest sign of their truth.

Grandmother is no more, but her memory still lives in our house, and there is much conversation about her. The talk turns chiefly on the will which had been drawn up a short time before her death, and which nobody knew anything of except her executor, Prince Ivan Ivanovitch. I notice a certain excitement amongst grandmother’s serfs, and often hear surmises as to whose property they are to become, and I confess that it is with a sensation of pleasure that I remember that we are her heirs.

When six weeks are over, Nicolas, who is always the newsmonger of the house, tells me that grandmother has left all her property to Lubotchka, appointing Prince Ivan Ivanovitch, and not papa, as her guardian until her marriage.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MY OWN AFFAIRS.

THERE are but a few months left before I enter the university. I study hard. I now await the coming of the masters without fear, and even find a certain pleasure in my studies. I like to answer my lesson clearly and distinctly. I am preparing for the mathematical faculty, and, to tell the truth, I have chosen it solely because I delight in the words sines, tangents, differentials, integrals, etc.

I am much shorter than Volodja, broad-shouldered and stout. I am as ugly as ever, and still make myself miserable about my ugliness. I try to seem eccentric, and have but one comfort; it is that I once overheard papa say that I had a *clever phiz*, and feel persuaded that he was quite right.

St. Jerome is pleased with me; praises me, and I no longer hate him; indeed, when he says that 'with my abilities, with my cleverness,' I ought to be ashamed of not doing well, I feel as if I even love him.

My watching the maid-servants' room has long been at an end; I now feel ashamed of hiding behind doors, and then the conviction that Masha really

loved Vassily has contributed not a little, I must confess, towards cooling my passion. I was finally cured of my unfortunate attachment by the marriage of Vassily and Masha, which had been at last permitted by my father through my intervention.

When the newly-married couple came to thank papa, bringing in a tray with various sweets upon it, and when Masha, in a cap with blue ribbons, thanks all of us, kissing each on his or her shoulder, I smell the scent of rose-oil pomatum which pervades her, but do not experience the least agitation.

In general I am beginning to cast aside the defects of my boyhood, except the most important one, however, which is fated to do me a great deal of harm in the course of my life, *i.e.*, a taste for philosophizing.

CHAPTER XXV.

VOLODJA'S FRIENDS.

THOUGH in the society of Volodja's friends I played a part which wounded my self-love, I liked to sit in his room when he had visitors, and silently to watch all that went on. Volodja's most frequent guests at that time were an aide-de-camp, Doubkoff, and a student, Prince Neklioudoff. Doubkoff was a short, sinewy, dark-haired man, no longer in his first youth, with rather short legs, but good-looking, and always in good spirits. He was one of those shallow-brained people who are liked just on account of their shallowness—who are incapable of seeing both sides of any question at once, and are always-carried away

by the impulse of the moment. The judgments of such people are often one-sided and defective, but always frank and impulsive. Even their narrow egotism seems excusable and attractive. Doubkoff had, besides, a double charm in the eyes of Volodja and myself; it lay in his warlike appearance, and, still more, in his being at an age which young people, for some unaccountable reason, usually confound with their idea of '*comme il faut*,' and which is consequently highly prized at that age. And Doubkoff was indeed what is considered '*un homme comme il faut*.' There was one thing that displeased me—it was that Volodja always looked as if he were ashamed of everything I did, even of my youthfulness, when Doubkoff was there.

Neklioudoff was plain; his small gray eyes, his round forehead, the disproportionate length of his legs and arms, could not be considered handsome. The only good points in him were his remarkably tall stature, his clear complexion, and his fine teeth. Such an original and energetic expression was imparted to his face by his narrow, bright eyes, and his ever-varying smile, at times stern, at others childishly vague, that it was impossible for anyone to pass him by without notice.

He was apparently very bashful, for every trifle made him blush to the tips of his ears; but his bashfulness was not like mine. The more he blushed the more resolute he looked, as if he were ashamed of his own weakness.

Though he seemed to be on friendly terms with Doubkoff and Volodja, it was clear to me that chance

alone had drawn them together. Their dispositions and his were very different. Both Volodja and Doubkoff seemed almost to dread anything like serious argument or sentiment. Neklioudoff, on the contrary, was an enthusiast, and would often, in spite of their raillery, begin to argue about some philosophical question or other, or some question of sentiment. Volodja and Doubkoff liked to talk about their lady-loves (they were sometimes in love with several ladies at the same time ; or, again, both would be in love with the same person) ; Neklioudoff, on the contrary, was always very angry if anybody hinted at his love for a certain 'red-haired girl.'

Though both Volodja and Doubkoff loved their own relations, they often allowed themselves to turn them into ridicule, when talking of them. Neklioudoff was beside himself if anybody dared speak disparagingly of his aunt, for whom he seemed to feel a sort of enthusiastic adoration. Volodja and Doubkoff used sometimes to go out together, after supper, without Neklioudoff, and called the latter 'a shy maiden.'

Prince Neklioudoff struck me, from the moment I first saw him, both by his conversation and by his outward appearance. Though I soon found much in his disposition that accorded with my own, perhaps, indeed, for that very reason, my feelings towards him, when I first saw him, were far from being friendly.

I did not like his quick look, his firm voice, his proud mien, and, least of all, the absolute indifference with which he treated me. How often did I long to contradict him, when he talked ; to punish him for

his firmness by beating him in argument, thus proving to him that I was clever, though he did not choose to notice me! I was restrained from doing so by bashfulness.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OUR ARGUMENTS.

VOLODJA, lounging on the sofa and leaning his head on his arm, was reading a French novel, when I entered his room, according to my usual custom, after my evening studies. He raised his head for a moment, glanced at me, and returned to his book—the movement was a simple, natural one, yet I grew red. His glance seemed to me to express wonder why I had come; and his looking down immediately after was construed by me into a wish to conceal the significance of that glance. This proneness to attach importance to the slightest gesture formed a characteristic trait of my disposition at that age. I went up to the table and took a book; but, before beginning to read it, it occurred to me that our having nothing to say, though we had not seen each other the whole day, was very queer.

‘Wilt thou be at home this evening?’

‘I don’t know. Why dost thou want to know?’

‘So,’ said I; and perceiving that our conversation lagged, I took up the book once more and began to read.

Oddly enough, we passed whole hours together in silence, when we were alone; but if a third person, even a taciturn one, were present, the [most various

and interesting topics of conversation would arise. We felt that we knew each other too well. To know each other too little or too well are equal hindrances to intimacy.

‘Is Volodja at home?’ Doubkoff’s voice was heard asking in the entrance-hall.

‘At home!’ said Volodja, taking his legs off the sofa and putting down his book.

Doubkoff and Neklioudoff entered in their cloaks.

‘Well, art thou coming to the theatre with us, Volodja?’

‘No, I have no time,’ said Volodja, growing red.

‘What stuff! do come.’

‘And besides, I have no ticket.’

‘Thou canst get as many as thou likest at the entrance.’

‘Stop a bit, I shall be back in a moment,’ said Volodja evasively; and he left the room, shrugging his shoulders.

I knew that Volodja longed to go, and that he had refused to do so for the simple reason that he had no money; and that now he had left the room in order to borrow five roubles from the butler, to be repaid from his next monthly allowance.

‘Good-evening, *diplomatist*,’ said Doubkoff, shaking hands with me.

Volodja’s friends had nicknamed me ‘*diplomatist*’ because one day, after dinner, grandmother had happened to say, speaking about our future careers, in their presence, that Volodja would be a military man; but that she hoped to see me a diplomatist, in a black dress-coat, and my hair ‘à la coq,’ which

she seemed to consider as the essential conditions of a diplomatic career.

‘Where is Volodja gone?’ asked Neklioudoff.

‘I don’t know,’ answered I, reddening at the thought that they had perhaps guessed why Volodja had left the room.

‘He has no money, very likely. Is it so? Oh, diplomatist!’ added he, understanding my smile. ‘And I have none, either. Hast thou any, Doubkoff?’

‘Let us see,’ said Doubkoff, getting his purse, and carefully fingering a few coins. ‘Here are five copecks; here is a *dvougrinvennik*,* and the rest f-f-f-l-o-w-n!’ said he, with a funny gesture.

Just at that moment Volodja come in again.

‘Well, are we going?’

‘No! . . .’

‘What a ridiculous fellow thou art!’ exclaimed Neklioudoff; ‘why dost not thou say outright that thou hast no money? Take my ticket.’

‘And what wilt thou do?’

‘He can go into his cousin’s box,’ said Doubkoff.

‘No; I shan’t go at all.’

‘Why not?’

‘Because, as thou knowest, I do not like to sit in the boxes.’

‘Why not?’

‘Because I do not like to do so. It would be rather awkward for me.’

‘The old story! I cannot understand how thou canst find it awkward for thee to go to people who

* Twenty copecks.

are always glad to see thee. It is ridiculous, mon cher.'

'What's to be done, si je suis timide? I am sure thou hast never blushed in thy life; and I do every moment of my life, and for every trifle,' said he, blushing as he spoke.

'Savez-vous, d'où vient votre timidité? . . . d'un excès d'amour-propre, mon cher,' said Doubkoff sentimentously.

'It is not from "excès d'amour-propre" in the least,' retorted Neklioudoff, nettled by the remark. 'On the contrary, I am bashful because I have too little "amour-propre." I always fancy people must find me disagreeable, tiresome . . . that is why. . . .'

'Get ready to go, Volodja,' said Doubkoff, taking him by the shoulder, and pulling his coat off. 'Come here, lazy one, and help your "barin" to dress.'

'It often happens to me, . . . ' continued Neklioudoff.

But Doubkoff was not listening to him. 'Tra-la-tra-la-tra-la-la!' sang he.

'Thou shalt not escape so easily,' said Neklioudoff; 'I shall prove to thee that bashfulness does *not* proceed from self-love.'

'Thou wilt prove it best by coming with us.'

'I have told thee, I am not going.'

'Well, then, stay here, and prove it to the diplomatist; when we return he can tell us all about it.'

'So I shall,' retorted Neklioudoff with childish wilfulness; 'only make haste back.'

'Well, and do you think I have too much self-love?' asked he, taking a seat near mine. 'Though

my opinion was already formed on the subject, I was so overcome with shyness at this unexpected address that I could not answer immediately.

‘I think you have,’ said I, while my voice shook, and my face grew red at the idea that now was the time to show him how clever I was. ‘I think all men are selfish, and that all a man does is done out of self-love.’

‘Then what is self-love, according to you?’ said Neklioudoff, smiling rather contemptuously, as I thought.

‘Self-love,’ said I, ‘is a conviction that I am better and cleverer than anyone else.’

‘But how can everybody be persuaded that he is cleverer and better?’

‘I do not know if I be right or wrong, and nobody, except myself, will ever confess it, I suppose; but I, for one, feel perfectly convinced that I am cleverer than anybody else in the world, and I am sure you think the same of yourself.’

‘Oh no! I must tell you that I have often met with people whom I have found to be cleverer than myself,’ said Neklioudoff.

‘That is impossible,’ said I decidedly.

‘Can it be that you really think so?’ said Doubkoff, looking fixedly at me.

‘I am quite in earnest,’ replied I; and then an idea suddenly occurred to me, to which I immediately gave utterance: ‘I shall prove it to you. Why does each of us love himself better than he loves anyone else? Because each finds himself better than anyone else, more worthy of being loved. If we found others

better than ourselves, we should love them better than we do ourselves, and that is a thing that never does occur. Even if it does sometimes, still I am right,' added I, with an involuntary smile of self-satisfaction.

Neklioudoff was silent for about a minute.

'I did not think you were so clever,' said he, with such a kind-hearted, sweet smile that I suddenly felt myself a most happy fellow.

Praise acts so powerfully, not only on the feelings, but on the very mind, that under its influence I seemed to myself to have grown cleverer; and thought followed thought with inconceivable rapidity. From self-love we imperceptibly came to 'love,' and that was a topic which was inexhaustible.

Though our arguments might have appeared sheer nonsense to a bystander, and seemed somewhat obscure and one-sided, they were of the highest significance for us. Our minds were so tuned in unison, that the lightest touch upon any one chord found an echo in the mind of the other. We were pleased by that very responsiveness in the resounding of every chord that we touched in the course of our conversation. It seemed to us that we had neither time nor words sufficient to pour out all the thoughts which filled our minds.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE BEGINNING OF OUR FRIENDSHIP.

FROM that day, an intimacy sprang up between me and Dimitri Neklioudoff, which was very pleasant, though it was rather a strange one. In the presence

of others, he hardly took any notice of me ; but no sooner were we alone, than we would ensconce ourselves in some snug corner, and begin to talk and argue, forgetful of all around us, and unmindful of the flight of time.

We talked about the future, about the fine arts, military service, marriage, the education of children, and it never once occurred to us that all we said was most nonsensical. It did not appear so to us, because the nonsense that we talked was clever and pleasing nonsense ; and when one is young, cleverness is prized and believed in. In one's youth all the powers of one's mind are directed towards the future, and that future takes such various, lively and bewitching shapes, under the influence of hope, based, not on the experience of the past, but upon an imaginary possibility of happiness, that these dreams of future bliss, when shared with another, are in themselves sources of true happiness at that age. In our metaphysical arguments, which formed one of the principal subjects of our conversations, I liked the moment when thought following thought in rapid succession, and growing more and more abstract, at last reaches such a point of haziness that there is no possibility of expressing your thought clearly, and you say one thing, while intending to say something very different. I liked the moment when, rising higher and higher in the domain of thought, you all at once comprehend all its vastness, and acknowledge the impossibility of going any further.

One day, during the carnival, Neklioudoff was so taken up with various pleasures and "amusements

that, though he called at our house several times a day, he did not say a word to me; and I felt so wounded by it, that I once more began to look upon him as a proud, disagreeable fellow. I longed for some opportunity of showing him that I did not value his company in the least, and that I did not care for him at all.

After the carnival, the first time he wanted to have a talk with me once more, I said I had some lessons to prepare, and went upstairs; in a quarter of an hour the door of the class-room was opened, and Neklioudoff came up to me.

‘Am I in your way?’ asked he.

‘No,’ replied I, though I had fully intended to say that I was busy.

‘Then why did you go out of Volodja’s room? It is long since we have talked together, and I have grown so used to it that I feel as if something were wanting.’

All my vexation evaporated in a moment, and Dimitri was again the same kind, agreeable companion.

‘I am sure you know why I went away,’ I said.

‘Perhaps I do,’ answered he, taking a seat by my side; ‘but if I do guess the reason, I cannot speak of it, but you can,’ added he.

‘So I shall; I went away because I was angry with you . . . no, not angry—but vexed. It is simply this: I fear you look down upon me, because I am so young.’

‘Do you know why we have come to be on such friendly terms?’ said he, answering my avowal by a

kind, clever glance; 'do you know why I like you better than I do people whom I know better, and with whom I have more in common? I have just found out why it is: you have a rare, wonderful quality—it is frankness.'

'Yes, I always tell just what I am ashamed to avow,' said I, in corroboration of his words; 'but that is only with those whom I can trust.'

'Yes, but in order to trust a man, you must be his friend, and we are not friends yet, Nicholas. Do you remember our conversation about friendship? In order to be true friends, one must be sure of one another.'

'Yes, one must be sure that one's words will never be repeated to anyone else,' said I. 'Yet our more serious, more interesting thoughts are just those that we never do speak about.'

And what wicked thoughts they are sometimes! Such base thoughts, that if we only knew that we should have to confess them, they would never dare to enter our heads.

'Do you know what I have thought of, Nicholas?' added he, rising and rubbing his hand, while a smile broke over his face. '*Let us do so*, and you will see how much good it will do us both; let us promise mutually to confess all to each other. We shall know each other, and then we shall not be ashamed of speaking openly; and in order to have nothing to fear of strangers, let us promise faithfully never to speak about each other to anybody else. Shall we?'

And we really did so. What the result was I shall tell in the sequel of my story.

Carr has said that in every friendship there are two sides: One loves; the other lets himself be loved: one kisses; the other presents his cheek to be kissed. It is quite true; in the friendship betwixt us I was the one who kissed, while Dimitri but offered his cheek to be kissed, though he, too, was not unwilling to kiss me. We loved each other in an equal degree, because we mutually knew and appreciated each other; however, that did not hinder his exercising an influence over me, nor my submitting to it.

It follows, as a matter of course, that under the influence of Neklioudoff, I involuntarily adopted his tendency to an enthusiastic worshipping of an ideal of virtue, and his conviction that the main purpose of life was constant improvement. At that time, it seemed to us a feasible thing to improve humanity, and to extirpate all human vices and sufferings—it seemed such a simple, easy thing to amend our own faults, to acquire every virtue and to be happy.

God knows whether all these noble dreams of our youth were really ridiculous, and whose fault it was that they were never realized.

Y O U T H .



CHAPTER I.

WHAT I CONSIDER AS THE BEGINNING OF YOUTH.

I HAVE already said that my friendship with Dimitri had thrown a new light upon life, its aims and its duties. This new light consisted in the conviction that the destination of man is to strive after moral perfection, and that this perfection is easily obtainable, possible, and continual. But up to the present time I had merely delighted in the revelation of the new thoughts resulting from that conviction, and in the forming of grand plans for a moral, active future; yet my life went on in the same trivial, disorderly, idle way.

The virtuous thoughts which we had discoursed about with my adored friend Dimitri—*dear good Mitia*,* as I used to call him to myself—had only pleased my mind, but had not touched the feelings of my heart. The time came, however, when these thoughts returned to my mind with such fresh power of moral revelation that I took fright, thinking what an amount of time I had been wasting, and I resolved

* Short name for Dimitri.

that very moment, that very second, to apply these thoughts to actual life, with the firm intention never to be false to them.

And it is this period that I consider the beginning of youth.

At that time I was at the close of my sixteenth year. Tutors continued to give me lessons; Mr. St. Jerome attended to my tuition; and I was unwillingly and reluctantly preparing for the university. Besides my studies, I gave up much of my time to rambling, solitary dreams and reflections; to gymnastics, in order to become the strongest man in the world; to strolling about the rooms without any precise purpose or thought, especially along the corridor which led to the maid-servant's room; and looking at myself in the looking-glass, which I, however, always left with a deep feeling of sadness, and even repulsion. My outward appearance, I felt convinced, was unsightly, and I could not even comfort myself with the usual consolations in such instances; I could not say that my face was expressive, intelligent, or noble-looking. There was nothing expressive in it—the most ordinary, gross, and unsightly features; and my small gray eyes, especially when I looked into the looking-glass, seemed rather stupid than clever; there was nothing manly about me; though I was not short of stature, and was very strong for my age, all my features were soft, flat, and meaningless. And there was even nothing noble-looking in me; on the contrary, my face was like that of a common peasant. I had large feet and hands, and at that time I felt very much ashamed of them.

CHAPTER II.

SPRING.

IN the year I entered the university, Easter was somewhat late, in the month of April, so that the examinations were appointed for the first week after Easter ; while during Passion Week I had to fast, as well as finally to prepare myself for them.

After the wet snow, which Karl Ivanovitch used to call 'the son come for his father,' the weather became mild, warm, and clear. In the streets there was not a flake of snow to be seen ; the dirty mud was replaced by wet, glistening roads and rapid brooks. In the sun the last snow on the roofs was already thawing ; in the garden in front of the house the trees were budding ; in the yard there was already a dry pathway leading to the stables past a frozen dunghill ; fresh mossy grass was already appearing between stones near the outer stairs. It was that peculiar time of spring which has the strongest influence upon the human mind : the sun shone clear and bright, but not too hot ; you saw brooklets and places where the snow had thawed ; a fragrant freshness filled the air ; and long transparent clouds glided along the light-blue sky. I do not know why it seems to me that in a large town this first period of the birth of spring acts still more powerfully on the mind ; one sees but little, it is true, but it seems to promise so much. As the morning sun poured his beams through the double windows on the floor of the schoolroom, of which I

was so heartily sick, I stood near the window solving some long algebraic equation on the blackboard. In one hand I held a tattered work on algebra by Franker, in the other a small piece of chalk, with which I had already soiled both hands, as well as my face and the sleeves of my jacket. Nicolas, who wore an apron and both sleeves turned up, was breaking off the putty from the double frames of the window, and unscrewing the tacks in the window which opened on the palisade. His work and the noise which he was making diverted my attention. At the same time I was in a very bad humour. Everything seemed to go wrong; I had made a mistake in the beginning of my calculation, so that I had to do it all over again; I had let the chalk drop twice; I was quite aware that my face and hands were dirty; the sponge had disappeared; the noise made by Nicolas made me nervous. I felt inclined to get angry and to grumble; I threw down the chalk, the algebra-book, and began walking up and down the room. But then I remembered that it was the day we were to go to confession, and that I ought therefore to refrain from doing anything wrong; I suddenly fell into a peculiarly mild state of mind, and went up to Nicolas.

‘May I help thee, Nicolas?’ said I, trying to give my voice the meekest expression; the thought that I was doing right in suppressing my vexation and assisting him increased my mildness still more.

The putty was removed, the tacks unbent; but though Nicolas pulled the frame with all his might, the window would not give way.

‘If the window come out at once, when I pull it together with him,’ thought I, ‘it will be a sign that it would be a sin to learn any more to-day.’

The window gave way on one side and came out.

‘Where is it to be taken to?’ said I.

‘Allow me; I shall manage it myself,’ replied Nicolas, evidently surprised, and apparently dissatisfied with my zeal; ‘they must not get mixed, so I keep them all numbered in the pantry.’

‘I shall mark it,’ said I, lifting up the frame.

‘I think that if the pantry had been two miles off, and the frame had weighed double its weight, I should have been quite pleased. I wanted to fatigue myself by rendering Nicolas a service. When I returned to the room, bricks and forms of salt already lay on the window-sill, and Nicolas was flinging the sand and dead flies through the open window. The fresh fragrant air had already penetrated into the room and filled it. From the window the noise in the town, and the twittering of the sparrows in the garden, were heard.

Everything looked bright; the room grew more cheerful; the mild spring breeze waved over the leaves of my algebra-book and the hair of Nicolas. I stepped close to the window, sat down on the window-sill, bent over into the garden, and sank into thought.

A new and extraordinarily pleasant feeling filled my soul. The damp ground along which the light-green grass appeared here and there, with its yellow stems; the rivulets glittering in the sun, and carrying along

tiny bits of earth and chips of wood ; the reddening branches of the lilac-trees, with their tumid buds, waving just below the window ; the busy twittering of birds on the bushes ; the blackish hedge wet with the thawing snow, but principally the fragrant damp air and the bright sun, seemed to speak audibly to me of something new and beautiful, which, although I can hardly explain it, produced a powerful impression upon me. I will try to explain it, as I understood it then. Everything spoke to me about beauty, happiness and virtue ; told me that one was as easily attainable and as possible as the other ; that one cannot exist without the other, and even that beauty, happiness and virtue were all one and the same. 'How was it that I did not understand it before ? How wicked I must have been ! how good and happy I can be in future !' said I to myself. 'Quick, quick ! from this very moment I must become another man, and begin another life.' Yet I remained sitting on the window-sill for a long time, meditating and doing nothing. Did you ever happen to go to sleep during a dull, rainy day, and awaking at sunset, to open your eyes, and see through the wide window-pane, below the linen blind which, inflated by the wind, beats against the window-sill, the shady side of the lime-tree alley and the wet garden-path lighted up by the bright slanting beams of the sun, to hear the merry voices of birds in the garden, and to see the insects hovering in the open window, glistening in the sun ; to inhale the fresh air after the rain, and to think : 'Was not it a shame to sleep through an evening like this ?' and to rise hastily in order to go into the

garden and enjoy life? If you have ever felt anything like this, it is but a sample of the feelings which I experienced at that time.

CHAPTER III.

DAY-DREAMS.

‘TO-DAY I am going to confession and shall purify myself from all sin,’ thought I; ‘and never more shall I . . .’ (here I recollected the sins which troubled me most). ‘I shall go to church every Sunday without fail, and afterwards read the Gospel for an hour; then out of the twenty-five roubles, which I shall receive every month, when I enter the university, I shall without fail give two roubles fifty cop. (the tenth) away to the poor, but so that nobody should know it, and not to beggars—I shall find out poor people, orphans or old women, whom nobody knows anything about. I shall have a separate room (most likely St. Jerome’s), and I shall put it in order myself, and keep it remarkably clean; but I shall never request the man-servant to do anything for me. He is a human being, as I am. Then I shall go to the university on foot every day; and if they give me a vehicle, I shall sell it, and give the money to the poor, too, and shall accurately fulfil all’ (what the ‘all’ was, I could not by any means have told at the time, but I well understood and felt ‘all’ to mean a prudent, moral and irreproachable life). ‘I shall work at the lectures, and shall even study the subjects beforehand, so that in

the first form I shall be the first, and shall write a dissertation; in the second I shall know everything beforehand, and be transferred straight to the third form, so that in my eighteenth year I shall have finished my course of studies as first candidate with two gold medals; then I shall pass my examination as "magister," then as "doctor," and shall become the first scientific man in Russia . . . even in Europe.' 'Well, and then?' said I to myself; but here I recollected that these day-dreams were all pride—a sin, which I would have to confess that very day to my father confessor, and I returned to the beginning of my meditations. 'In order to prepare the lectures, I shall walk to the Sparrow Hills,* there I shall choose some spot under a tree where I shall read the lectures; sometimes I shall take something to eat with me: cheese, or pastry from Pedotti's, or something else. I shall rest, and then read some nice book, or draw sketches, or play on some instrument; I shall by all means learn to play the flute. Then *she* will go for a walk to the Sparrow Hills, too, and some day will step up to me and will ask who I am. I shall look sadly at her, and tell her that I am the son of a clergyman, and that I only feel happy here, when I am alone—quite alone. She will give me her hand, will say something to me, and will sit down close to me. So we shall come to the same spot every day, shall be friends, and I shall kiss her. . . . No, that is wicked. On the contrary, from to-day, I shall not look at women any more. Never—never shall I go into the maid-servants' room, and shall even try not

* A picturesque spot in the outskirts of Moscow.

to pass near it; but in three years I shall not be under guardianship any more, and shall certainly marry. I shall purposely take as much exercise as possible, do gymnastics every day, so that when I am five-and-twenty I shall be stronger than Rappo. On the first day I shall hold eighteen pounds, in my outstretched hand for five minutes, the next day nineteen pounds, the third day twenty pounds and so on, so that at last I shall hold a hundred and fifty pounds in each hand, and shall be stronger than any of the household; and if anybody dare to offend me, or speak disrespectfully of *her*, I shall simply take him by the throat, raise him with one hand two archines* from the ground, and shall hold him so as to make him feel my strength, and then leave him; but, then, that is wrong too—no, it is nothing, for I shall not harm him, but only prove that I . . .’

Let not anyone reproach me, saying that the illusions of my youth are as childish as were those of my childhood and of my boyhood. I am convinced that if it be my fate to live to a great age, and if my narrative keep up to my age, I shall be found, when I am an old man, to have just the same impossible childish illusions as at present. I shall dream of some charming Maria, who will love me, a toothless old man, as Mazeppa was loved; I shall dream that my weak-minded son may suddenly by some extraordinary incident become a minister, or that I shall suddenly find myself in possession of millions. I am convinced that there is no human being, whatever age he or she may be, who is deficient in the beneficent, comforting

* One archine is a little less than a yard.

capacity of day-dreaming. But in spite of their ill-bearing the bewitching stamp of impossibility, the day-dreams of each man, whatever be his age, have their distinctive characters. At that period, which I consider as the boundary between boyhood and the beginning of youth, my day-dreams were based on four sentiments: love to *her*, to the imaginary woman, whom I was always thinking of in the same way and whom I every minute expected to meet. *She* was a little like Sonitchka, a little like Masha, the wife of Vassily, at the time when she washed linen in a trough, and a little like a woman, with pearls round her white neck, whom I had seen a very long time ago at the theatre in the box next to ours. The second sentiment was the desire of being loved. I wished to be known and loved by everybody. I wished to be able to announce my name, Nicolas Irtenieff, and to find everybody astounded at the information, to be surrounded and thanked. The third sentiment was the hope of some extraordinary striking happiness, such a strong and firm hope, that it almost degenerated into madness. I was so sure that soon by some extraordinary coincidence I should suddenly become the wealthiest and the most distinguished man in the world, so that I was continually in breathless expectation of some magic happiness. I kept expecting that it would come, and I should obtain all that man can desire; and I was always in a hurry, thinking that it had already begun while I was absent. The fourth and chief sentiment was dissatisfaction with myself, and repentance, but a repentance to such an extent closely connected with the hope of happiness, that

there was no sadness in it. It seemed to me so easy and natural to tear myself away from the past, to change, to forget all, and to begin life anew, that the past did not trouble or bind me. I even rejoiced in this feeling of repulsion for the past, and even tried to view it in a darker light than it really was. The darker the recollections of the past were, the clearer and brighter did the pure present emanate from it, unrolling rainbow-tints of a bright future before me. This voice of repentance and of passionate longing for perfection was the feeling that predominated in my mind at that period of my development, and it was the root of my new opinions concerning myself, other people, and all creation. Blessed voice of comfort! how often in those sad moments, when my soul silently submitted to the power of worldly falsehood and corruption, did it boldly rise against all that was evil, denouncing the past, making me love the bright present, and promising amendment and happiness in the future! Blessed voice of comfort! will a time ever come when I shall hear thee no more?

CHAPTER IV.

OUR FAMILY CIRCLE.

MY father was seldom at home during that spring. But when he was, he used to be extremely cheerful, playing his favourite tunes on the piano, or looking sweetly at us, and would make all sorts of jokes at our expense, and at Mimi's; such as, for instance pretending that the Prince of Georgia had seen

Mimi, when she was taking a drive, and had fallen so desperately in love with her that he had petitioned the Synod for a divorce ; or that I was appointed assistant to the Ambassador of Vienna—saying all this with a very grave face ; or he would frighten Katenka* with spiders, of which she was dreadfully afraid. He was very amiable in his manner to our friends Doubkoff and Neklioudoff, and continually kept telling us and the guests about his plans for the next year. Though these plans changed almost every day, and continually contradicted each other, they were so alluring, that we listened to them attentively, and Lubotchka† stared straight at papa's lips, as if fearing to lose a single word. At one time it was settled that we were to live in Moscow, at the university, and he was to go with Lubotchka to Italy for two years ; then he was to buy an estate in the Crimea on the south coast, and go there every summer ; then again to remove with all his family to St. Petersburg, etc. But besides this extraordinary cheerfulness, another change had lately taken place in my father, which surprised me. He had a fashionable suit made for himself : an olive-coloured dress-coat, fashionable pantaloons, with straps, and a long cloak, which suited him very well ; and he often smelt of scents when he went to pay his visits, and especially to one lady, about whom Mimi always spoke with a sigh, and with a face which seemed to say : ' Poor orphans ! ' ' What an unfortunate passion ! ' ' It is well *she* is no more,' etc. I was told by Nicolas—for my father never told us

* Diminutive for Catherine (little Kate).

† Diminutive for Lovelsoff (Love).

anything about his gambling affairs—that he had been very lucky at cards that winter, had won a good deal, had put the money into the savings bank, and did not intend to gamble any more. It was most likely because he was afraid he would be unable to abstain from doing so, if he remained in town, that he was so anxious to go into the country as soon as possible. He even resolved not to wait till I entered the university, but to go with the girls to Petrovskoje immediately after Easter, leaving Volodja* and me to join them later on.

During the whole winter and till the spring Volodja had been inseparable from Doubkoff (his friendship with Dimitri, however, had begun to cool). Their chief pleasure, as far as I could conclude from what I overheard them saying, consisted in drinking champagne incessantly, or driving about in sledges past the windows of a young lady, with whom, it seems, both were in love, and dancing *vis-à-vis*—not at children's balls any more, but at real balls. The latter circumstance, though Volodja and I still loved each other dearly, has separated us to a certain extent. We both felt that there was too great a difference—between a boy who is yet under the charge of tutors, and a man who dances at grand balls—for us to be able to talk frankly to each other. Katenka was already quite grown up, had read a great many novels, and the thought that she might soon get married did not seem a joke to me any longer; but although Volodja was also grown up, they did not get on well together, and even seemed mutually to

* Diminutive of Voldemar, or Walter.

despise each other. In general, when Katenka was alone at home, she found no interest in anything but novels, and was often dull; but as soon as any gentlemen visitors came, she would be very lively and amiable, and gave them sweet looks, which I could by no means understand nor make out what she meant by them. It was only afterwards, during a talk I had with her, when she told me that the only kind of flirtation allowed young ladies was to flirt with their eyes, that I could explain to myself these strange unnatural grimaces, which, it seems, others did not wonder at at all. Lubotchka had also begun to wear longer dresses, so that her ugly feet were hardly seen; but she was still the same cry-baby she had always been. Now she did not dream of marrying a hussar any longer, but a singer or a musician, and therefore she was zealously studying music. St. Jerome, knowing that he was to stay at our house only till I had finished my examination, found a situation at some count's, and from that time looked somewhat contemptuously upon us all. He seldom used to be at home, began to smoke cigarettes, which were at that time a great luxury, and was continually whistling lively tunes. Mimi grew more and more melancholy every day, and it seemed that, now we were growing up, she had left off expecting any good of anyone or anything.

When I came to dinner, I found only Mimi, Katenka, Lubotchka, and St. Jerome in the dining-room; papa was not at home, and Volodja was in his room with his friends, preparing for his examination, and had ordered his dinner to be brought up to him.

In general, the first place at table had lately been mostly occupied by Mimi, whom none of us respected, and the dinner had lost much of its charm. Dinner was not, as it used to be in mamma's or grandmother's time, a ceremony which at a certain hour united the whole family, and divided the day into two equal parts. We took the liberty to be too late, to come for the second course, to drink wine out of tumblers (Mr. St. Jerome himself being the first to do so); to lounge on the chair, to get up before dinner was over, and to take such-like liberties. From that time dinner ceased to be, as before, a merry family solemnity. It had been very different at Petrovskoje, when at two o'clock all dressed for dinner, and sat in the reception-room, and talking merrily in expectation of the appointed time. Exactly as the clock in the butler's room was about to strike two, Phocas, with a napkin on his arm, would enter with a dignified and rather stern expression on his face. 'Dinner is served,' he would say in a loud, drawling voice, and all would walk into the dining-room, with cheerful and contented looks, the elders in front, the younger behind, their starched skirts rustling, and their boots and shoes creaking, and would take their respective seats. Or, for instance, at Moscow, when all, talking calmly together, were standing before the covered table in the principal hall, waiting for grandmother, to whom Gavriilo had gone to announce that dinner was served, the door would open; the rustling of a dress and shuffling footsteps would be heard, and grandmother, in a cap trimmed with queer lilac-coloured ribbon on one side, would come out of her room,

smiling or frowning (according to the state of her health). Gavriilo would rush up to her arm-chair, there would be a noise of chairs moved, and with a chill running down one's back—a forerunner of appetite—we would take the starched damp napkin, eat a crust of bread, and impatiently and joyously rubbing our hands under the table, from time to time would look at the plates of soup served by the major-domo, out of respect to the rank and age of grandmother.

Now I did not experience either joy or emotion on sitting down to my dinner.

The chat of Mimi, St. Jerome, and the girls about the horrid boots the Russian teacher wore, or the flounced dresses of the Princesses Kornakoff—a chat which had formerly filled me with a contempt, which I had never tried to conceal, especially when Lubotchka and Katenka had been the speakers—did not destroy my virtuous state of mind. I was unusually meek; I listened to them with a peculiarly affectionate smile, respectfully asked them to pass me the kvass, and agreed with St. Jerome, who corrected me in a phrase which I used at dinner, saying that it was better to say 'je puis,' than 'je peux.' I must confess, however, that it was rather unpleasant to me to find that no one took any notice of my meekness and goodness. Lubotchka showed me after dinner a paper on which she had written down all her sins. I found it a very good plan, but added that it would be still better to write all one's sins down in one's heart, and that 'it was not quite the right thing.'

'Why not?' asked Lubotchka.

'Well, there is no harm in it; thou wilt not under-

stand me ;' and I went upstairs to my room, telling St. Jerome that I was going to work, but really intending, as we were to go to confession in an hour and a half, to draw up a list of my duties and occupations for my whole life ; to commit to paper what the aim and purpose of my life was to be ; and to write down some rules of conduct by which I was always to be guided.

CHAPTER V.

THE RULES OF CONDUCT I LAID DOWN FOR MYSELF.

I OBTAINED a sheet of paper, and resolved first of all to begin with the list of my duties and my occupations for the next year. The paper had to be ruled. As I did not find a ruler, I used the Latin dictionary for the purpose. But after drawing a line with the pen along the dictionary, and removing the latter, it appeared that, instead of a line, I had made an oblong blot of ink on the paper, besides which, the dictionary did not reach over the whole paper, and the line bent round the soft corner of the same ; so I took another sheet of paper, and by moving the dictionary, managed to rule it at last. Dividing my duties into three kinds : my duty to myself, my duty towards my neighbour, and my duty towards God, I began to write the first ; but there appeared so many of them, and so many subdivisions, that the ' rules of life ' had to be written down first, and then the list. I took six sheets of paper, sewed them together, and

wrote on the top, 'Rules of Life.' These three words were written so crookedly and unevenly, that I sat for some time thinking whether it would not be better to write them over again. I felt quite vexed, looking at the torn list and the disfigured title-page. Why is everything so beautiful and clear in my mind, and yet seems to be so deformed on paper and in life in general, when I try to put my thoughts in practice?

'The confessor has arrived; go downstairs, please, to attend to the preliminary prayer,' said Nicolas, coming in at that moment.

I put my writing-book away, glanced at the looking-glass, brushed my hair up (for I thought that it gave me a melancholy appearance), and went into the sitting-room, where there stood a covered table, with several images on it and lighted tapers. My father entered the room by another door at the same moment. The confessor, a gray-headed monk, with a stern, senile face, gave my father his blessing. My father kissed his small, broad, dry hand; I did the same.

'Call Voldemar,' said father. 'Where is he? Oh yes, I forgot; he is preparing to receive the Sacrament at the university.'

'He is studying with the prince,' said Katenka, looking at Lubotchka.

Lubotchka suddenly blushed, made a face, pretending that something hurt her, and left the room. I followed her. She stopped in the drawing-room, and wrote something down in pencil on her paper.

'What! have you committed a fresh sin?' asked I.

'No, nothing particular,' replied she, blushing.

At this time the voice of Dimitri was heard in the hall, bidding adieu to Volodja.

‘There is another temptation for you,’ said Katenka, entering the room, and addressing Lubotchka.

I could not make out what was the matter with my sister: she was so confused that tears filled her eyes, and her confusion, increasing more and more, changed into anger with herself and Katenka, who seemed to be teasing her.

‘Now that shows you are a stranger’ (nothing wounded Katenka more than to be called a ‘stranger,’ and that was just why Lubotchka used the word). ‘At such a solemn moment,’ continued she gravely, ‘you purposely annoy me. . . . You ought to understand . . . this is no joke at all.’

‘Dost thou know, Nicolinka, what she has written down?’ said Katenka, greatly offended at being called a stranger. ‘She has written . . .’

‘I did not expect thee to be so spiteful,’ said Lubotchka, bursting into tears, ‘at such a moment, and on purpose leading me into sin; thou art always trying to do so. I do not worry thee about thy feelings and sufferings.’

CHAPTER VI.

CONFESSION.

FULL of these and similar meditations, I returned to the drawing-room; and when all were assembled, the confessor, rising, prepared to read the prayer before confession. But when, amidst a deep silence, only

the expressive, stern voice of the monk was heard reading the prayer, and especially when he pronounced the words, *Disclose all your sins without false shame and concealment, and without trying to justify yourselves, and your souls shall be purified before God; but if you conceal anything, you commit a great sin*, the feeling of awe which I had experienced in the morning at the thought of receiving the Sacrament returned in full force. I even rejoiced in the consciousness of that state of mind, and tried to keep it, driving away all the other thoughts which came into my mind.

The first who went to confession was my father. He remained a very long time in grandmother's room, and during all the time we were all quite silent in the drawing-room, or talked in whispers together, questioning who was to go next. Finally, the voice of the monk was heard again reading the prayer, and then my father's steps. The door creaked, and he re-entered the drawing-room, humming, as he had a habit of doing, shrugging his shoulders, and not looking at anyone.

'Now, go thou, Luba, and mind thou tellest all. For thou art a great sinner,' said father gaily, pinching her cheek.

Lubotchka changed colour, took her paper out of her apron-pocket, put it away again, and, bowing her head, somehow making her neck look shorter, as if expecting a blow from above, walked towards the door. She did not stop there long, but when she came out her shoulders were shaking with sobs.

Finally, after pretty Katenka, who re-entered the

room smiling, my turn came. I went with the same feeling of awe, trying to increase it, if possible, and entered the dimly-lighted room. The confessor stood before the reading-desk and turned slowly towards me.

I did not remain in grandmother's room more than five minutes, but I came out happy, and firmly convinced at the time that I was quite absolved, morally regenerated, and a new man. Though I was disagreeably impressed by finding everything unchanged around me—the same rooms, the same furniture, my own appearance just the same as it had been (I should have liked every external thing to have undergone as great a change as my inner self seemed to me to have done)—I remained in that happy peaceful mood till I went to bed.

I was already half asleep, recalling to my mind all the sins from which I had just been absolved, when I recollected one shameful sin which I had concealed at confession. The words of the prayer were in my memory, and sounded incessantly in my ears. All my peace of mind instantly vanished. 'But if you conceal anything, you commit a great sin . . .' These words rang ceaselessly in my ears, and I saw myself to be such a great sinner that there was no punishment severe enough for me. I kept turning from side to side for a long time, thinking over my position, and every minute expecting the punishment of God, and even sudden death—a thought which frightened me indescribably. But suddenly a happy thought occurred to me—I resolved at daybreak to walk or drive to the monastery, where my confessor lived, and confess my sin ; and then I grew calm.

CHAPTER VII.

MY DRIVE TO THE MONASTERY.

I AWOKE several times during the night, being afraid to miss the morning by sleeping too long, and at six o'clock I was already up. I could see through the windows that day was breaking. I put on my boots and my clothes, which were lying crumpled, and not brushed, close to my bed, for Nicolas had not yet had time to take them, and without saying my prayers or washing myself, I went for the first time in my life all alone into the street.

On the opposite side, from behind the green roof of a large house, rose the reddish misty dawn. A rather severe spring-morning frost, which had locked up the rills and mud, pricked my feet and pinched my face and hands. In our street there was not a single cabman to be seen, whereas I had reckoned on taking one, in order to drive to the monastery and back. Only a few cart-loads were moving slowly along the Arbat* and two bricklayers talking together passed along the foot-path. After walking on for about a mile further, I met several men and women going to market with baskets on their arms; some were carrying barrels to fetch water; at the crossing of the street appeared a pie-man; one baker's shop was opened, and at last at the 'Arbatsky Gate' I found a cabman, an old man, nodding sleepily in his old-fashioned, worn-out cab covered with blue cloth, and

* A large street in Moscow.

all patched. Being half asleep, he demanded only twenty copecks for his fare to the monastery and back ; but then suddenly becoming aware of the mistake he had made, just as I was going to take my seat, he whipped his horse with the ends of the reins, and was driving away from me.

I must feed my horse ! Impossible, sir,' muttered he.

With great difficulty I persuaded him to stop, offering him two twenty-copeck pieces. He stopped his horse, looked closely at me and said : 'Get in, sir.' I must confess I was rather afraid that he would drive me into some by-street and rob me.

Seizing him by the collar of his tattered *armiack*, thus disclosing his wrinkled neck and bent back, I took my seat on the light-blue vehicle, and we began to jolt along the Vosdvigenka.* During our drive I managed to notice that both the *armiack* of the cabman and the back of the vehicle were made of the same piece of light-green cloth, a fact which for some incomprehensible reason made me quite calm and dispersed all the fears I had of his driving me into some by-street and robbing me.

The sun had already risen, and was gilding the cupolas of the churches brightly, when we came to the monastery. In the shade it was still freezing, but swift muddy rills were running along the road, and the horse went splashing through the mud. On entering the gates of the monastery, I addressed the first person I met, and asked where I could find the confessor.

'There is his cell,' said a monk who was passing,

* A street.

stopping for a moment, and pointing to a small house with a small staircase.

‘I am much obliged to you,’ said I. . . .

But what can the monks have thought of me, as each of them looked at me, on coming one after the other out of the church? I was neither a grown-up man nor a child; my face was not washed, my hair not brushed, my clothes covered with down, my boots uncleaned and covered with mud. To what class of people did the monks think I belonged? and they all looked attentively at me. However, I followed the direction given me by the young monk.

On the narrow pathway leading to the cells, I met an old man dressed in black with thick gray eyebrows, who asked me what I wanted.

For a moment I felt inclined to say nothing—to run back to the cab and drive home—but in spite of the wrinkled eyebrows, the face of the old man inspired confidence and trust. I said I wanted to see the confessor, telling his name.

‘Come along, young master; I will show you the way to him,’ said he, turning back and apparently at once guessing my errand. ‘The confessor is reading the morning service; he will soon come.’

He opened the door, and taking me through a clean passage and the entrance-hall, along a clean linen carpet, led me into the cell.

‘You must wait here,’ said he to me kindly, and went out.

The room was very small and exceedingly tidy. The whole furniture consisted of a small table,

covered with oil-cloth, which stood between two tiny folding windows, on which stood two pots of geranium, a bracket with some images on it, and a lamp hanging in front of them ; one arm-chair and two chairs. In the corner there was a clock, with a dial-plate ornamented with painted flowers, and with weights drawn up by chains ; on the partition-wall, which joined to the ceiling by means of whitewashed wooden poles (and behind which, probably, stood the bedstead), hung two cassocks on a nail.

The windows looked on a white wall, which stood at the distance of about five feet from them. Between the windows and the wall grew a small lilac-bush. No sound from outside reached the room, so that in the quietude the monotonous pleasant ticking of the pendulum sounded quite loud. When I was left to myself in this quiet corner, all my former thoughts and recollections vanished, as if they had never existed, and I sank into an inexpressibly pleasant feeling of melancholy. The yellowish nankeen cassock, with its shabby lining ; the worn leather covers of the books with brass clasps ; the dull green flowers so carefully watered, and their washed leaves, but especially the monotonous sound of the pendulum, seemed to speak to me so distinctly of some new, hitherto unknown life, of a life of solitude, prayer, and quiet, peaceful happiness. . . .

‘Months and years pass,’ thought I ; ‘he is always alone and calm ; he always feels that his conscience is clear before God, and that his prayer is heard by Him.’ I sat about half an hour on the chair, trying not to move and not to breathe loud, not to disturb the

harmony of sounds which told me so much. The pendulum went on in the same way, tapping louder to the right, softer to the left.

CHAPTER VIII.

MY SECOND CONFESSION.

THE steps of the confessor woke me from my reverie.

‘Good-day,’ said he, smoothing down his gray hair with his hand. ‘What is it you want?’

I asked for his blessing, and, with a special feeling of delight, kissed his small yellowish hand.

When I had explained my request to him, he said nothing to me, approached the image, and began the confession.

When the confession was over, and, surmounting my feeling of shame, I had told him everything that burdened my soul, he laid his hands upon my head, and in his sonorous, calm voice pronounced: ‘May the blessing of our Father in heaven be upon thee, my son, and may He for ever keep thee in faith, humility, and goodness! Amen.’

I was thoroughly happy; tears of happiness rose to my eyes; I kissed the fold of his cassock and raised my head. The face of the monk was quite calm.

I felt happy in the emotion, and, afraid of dispelling it, hastily took my leave, and without looking either to the right or left, so as not to divert my thoughts, I passed through the gate, and again took

my seat on the striped shaking droshki. But the jolting and bumping of the vehicle, the various objects which glided before my eyes, soon dispelled the feeling, and I now thought that the confessor was perhaps thinking that he had never met so good a young man as I was, and never would meet one—that there were no men in existence like me. I was convinced of it; and this conviction made me feel so happy, that I felt it absolutely necessary to tell someone about it.

I wished very much to talk to somebody; but as there was nobody at hand but the cabman, I addressed him.

‘Was I long?’ asked I.

‘Well, yes, and the horse ought to have been fed long ago, for I only drive about at night,’ replied the old cabman, who had now become comparatively cheerful since the sun had appeared.

‘But it seemed to me as if I had been there only one minute,’ said I. ‘Do you know why I went to the monastery?’ added I, seating myself in the part of the vehicle which was nearer to the old cabman.

‘That is no business of mine. Our business is to drive wherever we are ordered to go,’ replied he.

‘Well, but all the same, what do you think?’ continued I.

‘Perhaps you have to bury somebody, so you went to buy a place in the burial-ground,’ said he.

‘No, friend; do you know why I went?’

‘I do not, sir,’ repeated he.

The voice of the cabman seemed to me such a kind one, that I resolved, for his edification, to tell him the

reason of my drive, and even the feelings which I experienced.

‘Would you like me to tell you? Don’t you see. . . .’

And I told him all, and described all my fine feelings. I even now blush at the recollection.

‘So,’ said the cabman distrustfully.

And he was silent for some time after this, and did not move, except every now and then, to settle the skirt of his overcoat, which was always slipping from underneath his legs, encased in large boots, and flapping against the step of the vehicle. I was beginning to think that, like the confessor, he was persuaded that there was not a better man than I was in the whole world, when he suddenly turned to me.

‘And what, sir, is your occupation? Are you a gentleman?’

‘What?’ asked I.

‘Are you a landowner?’ repeated he with his toothless lips.

‘No, he has not understood me,’ thought I; but I did not speak any more till I reached our house.

My satisfaction of the feelings of emotion and piety which I had experienced, if not the feelings themselves, lasted almost all the way, in spite of the people, who checkered the streets in the bright sunshine; but as soon as I came home, the feeling vanished entirely. I had not two twenty-copeck pieces to pay the cabman. The major-domo Gavriilo, to whom I already owed money, would not lend me any more. The cabman, on seeing me run twice across the courtyard trying to obtain money, and probably guessing what the matter was, descended from the

droshki, and though he had seemed to me to be so kind, began to grumble loudly, evidently with the intention of wounding my feelings, about there being swindlers who do not pay the fare.

At home all were still asleep, so that I could not borrow two twenty-copeck pieces from anybody but from the servants. At last Vassily, upon my giving him my word of honour that I would repay him, though I could see by his face that he did not believe me, paid the cabman simply because he liked me, and remembered the service I had rendered him formerly. Thus my fine feelings all turned to smoke. When I began to dress for church in order to go and receive the Sacrament with all the others, I found that my suit of clothes had not been altered, and was not fit to put on, upon which I committed a great many new sins. Putting on another suit, I went up to the Communion-table with my thoughts all in a maze, and with an entire distrust in my 'excellent disposition.'

CHAPTER IX.

HOW I PREPARE FOR MY EXAMINATION.

ON the Thursday in Easter week, my father, sister, and Mimi, with Katenka, went to the country, so that only Volodja, myself, and St. Jerome remained in grandmother's large house. The mood I had been in on the day of confession, and of my drive to the monastery, was entirely over, and had only left a faint though pleasant remembrance, which grew

fainter and fainter under the new impressions of the more independent life I now led.

The copybook entitled 'Rules of Life' was also put away, together with my rough-draft school books. Though I liked the idea of drawing up rules for all the circumstances of life, and taking them as my guide, and the idea of doing so seemed to me a very simple, and at the same time a very grand one, and though I intended to apply these rules to my life, yet I again seemed to have forgotten that this had to be done at once; I kept putting it off. It was a comfort to find, however, that every thought which came into my head now agreed with some of the subdivisions of my rules and duties—either with the rules that referred to our neighbours, or those that referred to myself or to God. 'I shall write it down, and many, many other thoughts which will come to me then on the subject,' said I to myself. Now I very often put the question to myself: 'When was I better and more right—when I believed in the omnipotence of human intellect, or now, when, having lost the power of development, I doubt the power and importance of the human intellect?' and I cannot give myself any positive answer.

The consciousness of independence and the fresh feeling of expectation, of which I have already spoken, agitated me to such a degree that I was decidedly unable to master myself, and I qualified myself very badly for the examination. Sometimes in the morning I would be studying in the class-room, knowing that it was necessary to work, for the next day I was to undergo an examination on some sub-

ject of which I had not yet read over two questions, when suddenly a sweet breath of spring air would be wafted in through the open window, and it would seem as if there were something urgently to be remembered ; my hands would let the book fall ; my feet would begin to move up and down, while it would seem as if somebody had suddenly touched some spring and brought some mechanical work into motion ; my head would feel so free, and so many various happy illusions would begin to pass through my mind, that I hardly had time to follow the bright flash. One, two hours would pass imperceptibly, or else I would sit over my book, and try to concentrate all my attention upon it, when suddenly I would hear a woman's step and the rustling of a dress in the corridor, and everything would fly out of my head, and it was impossible to sit still, although I knew very well that besides my grandmother's old maid-servant, Gasha, nobody could be passing along the passage. ' Yes, but if it were *she* ?' would flash across my mind. ' But if *it* has begun, and I miss it ?' and I would rush into the passage and see that it was really Gasha ; but for a long time afterwards I would be unable to master my thoughts. The spring being touched again, an awful discord would begin once more ; or in the evening I would sit alone in my room with a tallow candle, when suddenly throwing aside my book for a moment, in order to trim the candle or to seat myself more comfortably, I would notice how dark it was all around in every corner, and how silent all was in the house ; and again, it would be impossible not to stop and hearken or look through the

darkness of the open door into the dark room, not to remain motionless for a long, long time, or not to go downstairs and walk through all the empty rooms. Often in the evening I used to sit very late in the principal hall, unnoticed, listening to the tune entitled 'The Nightingale,' which Gasha was playing with two fingers on the piano, as she sat alone in the large hall dimly lighted by a tallow candle. But when the moon shone I could absolutely not help getting up from my bed, and, leaning over the window-sill into the garden, looking at the glittering roof of Shaposhinkoff's house, at the slender belfry of our parish church, and at the evening shadow thrown by the fence and the bushes upon the little garden-path ; I could not help sitting up so long that I found it difficult to get up even at ten o'clock the next morning.

Thus, if it had not been for my teachers, who continued to come, St. Jerome, who now and then involuntarily stimulated my self-love, and especially if I had not wished to appear a steady young fellow in the eyes of my friend Neklioudoff—that is, to undergo my examination well, which he considered a most important affair—if it had not been for all this, I say, the spring air and the independence I now enjoyed would have made me forget all that I had learnt before, and I should not have undergone my examination at all.

CHAPTER X.

MY EXAMINATION IN HISTORY.

ON April 16, under the protection of St. Jerome, I entered the large hall of the university for the first time. We arrived in our rather elegant phaeton. I wore a frock-coat for the first time in my life, and all my clothes, even the linen and stockings I had on, were of the newest and best. When the porter downstairs helped me off with my overcoat, and I stood before him in all my finery, I felt somewhat ashamed of being so dazzling. However, no sooner did I enter the light, crowded hall, and see hundreds of young fellows come in school-uniforms and others in frock-coats, some of whom looked at me with indifference, and at the farther end of the hall several eminent professors, walking leisurely round the tables or sitting in large armchairs, than I immediately felt disappointed in my hopes of attracting general attention, and my face, which at home and in the entrance-hall had worn an expression of something like regret at looking too grand and fine, now expressed nothing but shyness and confusion. I even fell into the opposite extreme, and was delighted to see a very shabbily-dressed man with gray hair, though he was not old, who sat at some distance from the others on the last bench. I presently sat down beside him, and began to contemplate those who came up to be examined, and drew my conclusions about them. There were divers figures and faces, but all of them, according to

my ideas at that time, could easily be divided into three groups.

There were such as myself, who had come with their tutor or with their parents to the examination hall, and amongst these were Ivin the younger, who had come there with my old acquaintance Frost, and Iliinka Grap, with his old father. All these had slight tokens of a beard on their chins, snowy linen, and sat quite still, without opening their books which they had brought with them, and were looking at the professors and the examination-tables with evident timidity. The second group consisted of young fellows dressed in their gymnasium uniforms, many of whom had already begun to shave their beards. They were for the most part acquainted with each other, talked aloud, calling the professors by their Christian and patronymic names, preparing their answers, passing books to each other, stepping over the benches from the entrance-hall, and bringing cakes and sandwiches, which they ate there, slightly inclining their heads on a level with the bench. And lastly, the third group of those who had to be examined, which did not number many, consisted of quite old fellows, some in frock-coats and others in long-coats, and without any signs of linen about them. These observed a very serious attitude, sat quite isolated, and looked very gloomy. The one whom I had noticed upon my first entrance, with a feeling of pleasure at his not being dressed as well as I was, belonged to the last group. Leaning both elbows on the table, his fingers passed through his entangled grayish hair, he was reading, and only for an instant looking at me in a rather

unfriendly manner, he frowned gloomily and stuck his shiny elbow into my side, in order to prevent my moving closer up to him. The pupils from the gymnasium, on the contrary, were too sociable, and I was a little afraid of them. One of them, pushing a book into my hands, said: 'Pass it over to him there;' another, passing by me, said: 'Make way there, old fellow, will you?' a third, climbing over the bench, leaned against my shoulder as if it were a bench. All this seemed strange and unpleasant to me; I considered myself much superior to these pupils from the gymnasium, and thought they ought not to take such liberties or be so familiar with me. At last the names were called out; the scholars of the gymnasium went boldly forward, they mostly answered well, and returned with cheerful faces; our fellows were much more faint-hearted, and, it seemed to me, did not answer as well. Among the old fellows some answered very well indeed; others very badly. When 'Semenoff' was called out, my neighbour with the gray hair and sparkling eyes, pushing rudely past me, trod upon my toes as he went up to the table. As I could judge by the attitude of the professors, he answered well and boldly. On returning to his place, without having tried to find out what mark he had got, he quietly took up his books and went out. I had already started several times at the sound of the voice calling out the names, but my turn, according to the alphabetical list, had not come yet, although several names beginning with a K had already been called out. 'Ikonin and Tenjeff' suddenly shouted somebody from the corner where the professors were

seated. A chill ran down my back and through my hair.

‘Who was called? Who is Bartenjeff?’ I heard someone saying.

‘Ikonin, go; you are called. But who is Bartenjeff, Mordenjeff?’

‘I do not know,’ said a tall, fresh-coloured pupil from the gymnasium, standing behind me.

‘It is your turn,’ said St. Jerome.

‘My name is Irtenjeff,’ said I to the fresh-coloured scholar of the gymnasium; ‘did they say Irtenjeff?’

‘Well, yes. Why do you not go? . . . Look what a dandy!’ added he in a low tone, but so that I could hear him as I went along between the benches.

Ikonin, a tall young man of about five-and-twenty years of age, and who belonged to the third group, *i.e.* of the old fellows, preceded me. He had an olive-coloured tight dress-coat on, a blue satin necktie, over which his long red hair hung down, carefully brushed à la moushik.* I had noticed his appearance when sitting on the bench. He was not bad-looking, but rather talkative. I was particularly struck by his strange red hair, which covered his neck, and a curious habit he had of incessantly unbuttoning his waistcoat and scratching his chest, with his hand underneath his shirt.

Three professors were sitting at the table, which I approached with Ikonin; neither of them returned our bow. A young professor shuffled the tickets like a pack of cards; the other professor, with a star attached to his dress-coat, looked at a scholar from

* Moushik—a peasant.

a gymnasium before him; the latter was talking somewhat quickly about Charles the Great, continually adding the word 'finally'; and the third, an old man with spectacles on, inclining his head, looked at us over his spectacles, and pointed to the tickets. I felt that he was gazing at me and Ikonin, and that something in our appearance did not please him (perhaps it was the red hair of Ikonin); for, looking again at us both, he made an impatient gesture with his head, as a sign that we were to draw the papers containing the questions we were to answer. I felt vexed and offended: first, because nobody had returned our bow; and secondly, because they apparently classified me in the same group with Ikonin, and were already prejudiced against us on account of Ikonin's red hair. I boldly took a ticket, and was about to answer, but the professor turned his gaze upon Ikonin. I read my ticket over—it was one I knew; and quietly waiting for my turn to come, I watched what was going on before me. Ikonin was not timid at all, rather too bold even; he moved sideways to take a ticket, threw his hair back, and boldly read what was written on the paper. He had already opened his lips to answer, as it seemed to me, when suddenly the professor with the star, after having let the scholar from the gymnasium go with an approving nod, looked at him. Ikonin, as if recollecting something, stopped. A general silence prevailed for about two minutes.

'Well?' said the professor with the spectacles.

Ikonin opened his lips and was silent again.

'You are not the only one here. Do you choose to answer or not?' said the young professor.

But Ikonin did not even look at him. He looked fixedly at the ticket, and did not utter a single word. The professor with the spectacles looked at him through his spectacles, and over his spectacles, and without his spectacles ; for he had had time in the meanwhile to take them off, wipe them carefully, and to put them on again. Ikonin did not utter a single word. Suddenly a smile flashed over his face ; he threw his hair back, again standing sideways at the table, put his ticket down, looked at all the professors by turns, then at me, turned round, and with a firm step, and swinging his arms backwards and forwards, went back to his seat. The professors exchanged looks.

‘ A nice fellow ! ’ said the younger professor.

I moved closer to the table, but the professors kept on talking almost in whispers, as if none of them even suspected my presence. I was at that time quite convinced that all three professors were extraordinarily interested in the question, whether I should undergo my examination, and whether I should undergo it well, and that it was only for form’s sake that they pretended to be perfectly indifferent, and tried to look as if they had not noticed me.

When the professor with the spectacles addressed me with the request to answer the question, I looked at him, and felt ashamed for him, that he had been playing the hypocrite with me. So I stammered a little at the beginning, but then got on better ; and the question being one on Russian history, which I knew perfectly well, I answered splendidly, and even went so far as to offer to take one more ticket, wishing to let the professors see that I was not Ikonin,

and that I was not to be put on a par with him ; but the professor, nodding his head, said ' Good,' and made a mark in his note-book. On returning to my seat, I was instantly informed by the scholars from the gymnasium, who, God knows how, got to know everything, that I had ' five ' for my answer.

CHAPTER XI.

MY EXAMINATION IN MATHEMATICS.

BY the time the following examinations came on, I had already several acquaintances, besides Grap, whom I never considered unworthy of my acquaintance, and Ivin, who for some reason avoided me. Several greeted me when I came in. Ikonin even seemed quite glad to see me, and told me he was to be re-examined in history ; that the professor of history was angry with him ever since his last examination, during which he had also tried to put him out. Semenoff, who, like myself, was going up for the degree of mathematics, again avoided everybody till the end of the examinations. He sat quietly alone, leaning on his arms, and pushing his fingers through his gray hair, and went through his examinations excellently. He was the second. The first was a scholar from the first gymnasium. He was a tall, thin, and dark young fellow, very pale, with a black scarf tied round his cheek, and his forehead covered with pimples. His hands were thin and red, with extraordinarily long fingers, the nails bitten off, so that the ends of his fingers seemed to be tied round

with thread. All this seemed to me very fine, and just what the first scholar in a gymnasium ought to be. He spoke to all, as the others did, and I made his acquaintance ; yet, as it seemed to me, there was in his gait, in the movement of his lips and eyes, something strangely magnetic.

I came earlier than usual to the examination in mathematics. I knew the subject fairly well, but there were two questions in algebra which I had somehow concealed from my tutor, and which I knew nothing about. These were, as I remember very well, the theory of conjunction, and Newton's binomial. I took my seat on the back bench, and looked over the two questions which I did not know ; but not being accustomed to study in a noisy room, and seeing that there would not be time enough, I could not concentrate my attention on what I was reading.

'Here he is. Come here, Nekliouhoff,' said a familiar voice behind me. It was Volodja's.

I turned round and saw my brother and Dimitri, who, with their coats unbuttoned and swinging their arms to and fro, were passing over the benches towards me. One could immediately see that they were students of the second year, and that they felt quite at home at the university. The aspect of their unbuttoned coats alone showed their contempt for us fellows who were entering, and inspired us with envy and respect. I felt very much flattered to think that all the others would see that I was acquainted with two students of the second course, and I quickly rose and went to meet them.

Volodja could not forbear betraying his consciousness of superiority.

‘Heigh-ho, poor old chap!’ said he; ‘what, hast not been examined yet?’

‘No.’

‘What art thou reading? Art not thou ready?’

‘No, not quite; there are two questions I do not know—I do not understand.’

‘What! this here?’ said Volodja, and began to explain the binomial of Newton to me, but so quickly and confusedly that, reading distrust of his knowledge in my eyes, he turned to Dimitri, and seeing the same expression in his, most likely he blushed, but went on explaining something which I did not understand.

‘No; stop a minute, Volodja; let me go through it with him, if there is time,’ said Dimitri, looking towards the corner where the professors were seated, and sitting down beside me.

I noticed immediately that my friend was in that self-sufficient yet meek mood, to which he always was liable when he felt satisfied with himself, a mood I particularly liked in him. As he knew mathematics well and spoke clearly, he went through the question with me so thoroughly that I remember it even now. He had only just finished, when St. Jerome said in a low whisper: ‘À vous, Nicolas!’ and, following Ikonin, I left the bench without having had time to look over the other question I did not know. I approached the table at which two professors were sitting, and a scholar from the gymnasium stood before a black-board. He was boldly solving some formula, noisily breaking the bit of chalk he held in his hand against

the board and writing away, although the professor had already said to him 'That will do,' and had requested us to take a question each.

'What am I to do, if I get the theory of conjunction?' thought I, as with trembling fingers I drew a ticket from the soft heap. Ikonin took the ticket that lay at the top as boldly as he had done at the preceding examination, looked at it, and frowned angrily.

'Always my confounded ill-luck!' muttered he.

I looked at mine. Oh, horror! it was the theory of conjunction . . .

'And what is yours?' asked Ikonin.

I showed it to him.

'I know that,' said he.

'Will you change?'

'No, it is all the same; I feel I am not in the vein to answer,' Ikonin had just time to whisper, when the professor called us to the board.

'Well, everything is lost!' thought I; 'instead of passing a splendid examination as I expected, I shall be disgraced for ever, worse than Ikonin.' But suddenly Ikonin, turning round to me before the professor's eyes, snatched the ticket from my hand and gave me his. I looked at the ticket. It was Newton's binomial.

The professor was not an old man; he had a pleasant and clever expression of face, as especially conveyed by his convex forehead.

'How is it that you are changing your tickets, gentlemen?' said he.

'No; he simply gave me his to look at, sir,' said

Ikonin with great presence of mind, and again the word 'sir' was the last word he pronounced on that spot. On going back, and passing by me, he looked at the professors, at me, and shrugged his shoulders with a smile, as much as to say : ' Never mind !'

(I was afterwards told that Ikonin had already gone up for examination two years running, and this was the third.)

I solved the question which I had just prepared quite correctly. The professor even told me that I did it better than could have been expected, and marked me a five.

CHAPTER XII.

MY EXAMINATION IN LATIN.

EVERYTHING went on very well until the Latin examination. The scholar from the gymnasium, with the scarf round his cheek, was the first, Semenoff the second, I the third. I had even begun to boast and to feel persuaded, that, notwithstanding my youth, I was 'somebody' after all.

On the day of my first examination, all had talked about the professor of Latin with sundry expressions of fear ; he was said to be a brute, and to delight in the misery of young men who came up to be examined, especially of those who were not crown students, and always spoke only in Latin or Greek. St. Jerome, who was my Latin teacher, tried to keep up my courage, and I myself thought that as I could trans-

late Cicero and part of Horace without a dictionary, and as I knew Zumpt very well, I was as well prepared as the others; but it turned out otherwise. During the whole morning, nothing was talked of but the fate of those who went up before me: one got a nought, another a one; one had been scolded and threatened with expulsion. Semenoff and the first scholar from the gymnasium alone went up as calmly as they had done before, and returned, each having gained five marks. I felt beforehand that some ill-luck would befall me, when being called out together with Ikonin we went up to the small table, at which that awful professor sat quite alone. The awful professor was a short, thin, yellow-faced man, with long oily hair and with a most pensive countenance.

He gave Ikonin a book of Cicero's speeches, and made him translate it.

To my great surprise, Ikonin not only read, but translated some lines with the assistance of the professor, who prompted him. Perceiving my superiority over such a weak rival, I could not help smiling, and even rather contemptuously, when it came to the analysis, and Ikonin, as before, sank into an obviously helpless silence. I thought to please the professor by this clever, slightly sarcastic smile, but it proved the reverse.

'It seems you know better,' said the professor to me in bad Russian; 'we shall see. Well, now answer.'

Afterwards I heard that the Latin professor patronized Ikonin, and that the latter even lived at his house. At once I answered the question of syntax

which had puzzled Ikonin, but the professor made a face and turned away from me.

‘Very well, your turn will come ; we shall see,’ said he, without looking at me, and went out to explain to Ikonin the question he had put him. ‘Go,’ added he, and I saw him putting a four to Ikonin in the mark-book.

‘Why,’ thought I, ‘he is not at all as strict as they said he was.’ After Ikonin was gone, for about five minutes, which seemed to me like five hours, he busied himself with putting away books, tickets, wiping his nose, adjusting the arm-chairs, stretching himself, then looking all round the room, but not at me. This feigned indifference to me did not seem to satisfy him, however, so he opened a book and pretended to be reading as if I were not there at all. I stepped a little closer and coughed slightly.

‘Oh yes ! you are here still ? Well, translate anything,’ said he, giving me a book ; ‘no, take this one.’

He glanced over Horace, and opened it at a passage which, as it seemed to me, was perfectly untranslatable.

‘I have not prepared this,’ said I.

‘And so you want to answer what you have learned by heart—very good ! No, translate this.’

I began to try and make out the sense ; at every interrogative look of mine he only shook his head, saying, with a sigh, ‘No.’ At last he shut the book, so nervously and quickly that his finger got caught between the leaves ; drawing it angrily out, he gave me a question out of grammar, and, reclining in the chair, kept an ominous silence. I was going to answer,

but the expression of his face closed my mouth at first, and then all I said seemed to me to be wrong.

‘It is not so; it is not so—not so at all,’ said he suddenly in his nasty accent, quickly altering his position, leaning against the table and playing with his gold ring, which was loose on the thin finger of his left hand. ‘It is impossible, gentlemen, to prepare thus for the highest educational course; you only want to wear the uniform with a blue collar, and think you can be students, with just a little smattering of knowledge. No, gentlemen, the subject must be studied thoroughly,’ etc.

During this speech, uttered in his distorted accent, I gazed with stupefied attention at his downcast eyes. At first I was worried by my disappointment at not being ‘third,’ then by the fear of not passing through at all, and finally came the perception that I was treated with injustice, of wounded self-love and undeserved degradation: besides this, a feeling of contempt for the professor—who in my opinion was not a man *comme il faut*, as I discovered by looking at his short, hard and round nails—excited and embittered me still more. Looking at me and noticing my trembling lips and my eyes filled with tears, which he probably took for an entreaty to him to give me a better mark, he said, as if pitying me (in the presence of another professor, who by this time had approached the table):

‘Very well, I shall put you down a mark which will not lead to your expulsion (this meant a two); you do not deserve it, but I will do so only out of regard to your youth, and in hopes that at the

university you will not be so careless about your studies.'

His last sentence, uttered in the presence of the other professor, who looked at me, as if to say, 'Yes, you see, young man!' confounded me. For a moment all grew dark before my eyes; the awful professor at the table seemed to me to be sitting somewhere at a great distance, and with awful distinctness a strange idea struck me: 'And what if . . .? what will the consequences be?' But whatever it was, I did not act up to it; but, on the contrary, unconsciously but most respectfully bowed to both professors, and slightly smiling, very likely with a smile like that Ikonin had worn, left the table.

The injustice with which I had been treated produced such a powerful impression on me then, that had I been free to act as I chose, I should not have gone up for examination any more. I lost all ambition (to be third was not to be thought of), and went through the remaining examinations without either care or emotion. On an average, however, I had more than four, but this did not interest me any more; I reflected, and demonstrated very clearly to myself that it was extremely absurd, and even 'mauvais genre,' to try to be first; all that was necessary was not to be too badly nor too well prepared, like Volodja. I intended to keep to this for the future at the university, though in this instance I differed for the first time in opinion with my friend.

I only thought about the uniform, the three-cornered hat, about having my own carriage, my own room, and principally my perfect independence.

CHAPTER XIII.

I AM A GROWN-UP MAN.

THE thought had its charms.

On May 8, on returning home from my last examination in theology, I found the foreman from Rosanoff's, who had already some time before brought me a uniform hastily tacked together, and a coat of glossy-black cloth, and had marked the facings with chalk, and who now brought me a grand suit with bright gilt buttons, wrapped in paper.

Putting on these clothes and finding that they fitted perfectly well, though St. Jerome assured me that there were folds at the back of the coat, I went downstairs with a self-conceited smile, which quite involuntarily came over my face, and went up to Volodja, feeling, but pretending not to notice, the looks of the domestics, who were all staring at me from the entrance-hall and from the passage. Gavriilo, the major-domo, overtook me in the great hall, congratulated me, and handed me, by order of my father, four white notes (one hundred roubles each), and told me that by my father's orders the coachman Kousma, the proletka* and the sorrel Krassavchik† were from that day at my entire disposal. I was so delighted at this almost unexpected happiness, that I could not keep up my pretence of indifference before Gavriilo, and feeling quite confused and breathless

* A sort of a four-wheeled cabriolet.

† Krassavchik (beauty), the name of the horse.

with joy, I said the first thing that came into my mind ; I think it was, ' Krassavchik is an excellent trotter.' Then seeing all the heads, that were peeping at me from behind the doors of the entrance-hall and the passage, I felt unable to restrain myself any longer, and ran quickly through the principal hall, in my new coat with shining gilt buttons. Just as I entered Volodja's room, I heard behind me the voices of Doubkoff and Neklioudoff, who had come to congratulate me, and to propose to me to go and dine together somewhere and drink champagne in honour of my having entered the university. Dimitri told me that, although he did not care to drink champagne, he would go with us, in order to drink to our mutual friendship, which was to be further carried out by our saying 'thou'* to each other instead of 'you.' Doubkoff said that I looked rather like a colonel ; Volodja did not congratulate me, and only said, very dryly, that we could now go to the country the next day but one—as if, though he was glad I had entered, he found it somewhat unpleasant to see that I was now a grown-up man too. St. Jerome, who also came in, said pompously that his duties were over, that he did not know whether he had fulfilled them well or badly, but that he had done what he could, and that the next day he was going to the count's. In answer to all that was said to me, I felt a happy but rather absurdly self-conceited smile expanding over my face against my will, and I noticed that the smile communicated itself to all those who spoke to me.

* In Russian the pronoun *thou* is very generally used ; amongst relatives and good friends always.

And now I have no tutor, I have got my own carriage (droshki), my name stands in the list of students, I wear a sword by my side, the police-soldiers will sometimes salute me. . . . I am grown up—I am, I think, happy!

We resolved to dine at Yar's,* at five o'clock; but as Volodja went to Doubkoff's, and Dimitri disappeared as usual, saying he had business to attend to before dinner, I had two hours to myself. For a long time I kept walking through all the rooms, and looking into every looking-glass—now with my coat buttoned up, then with the same unbuttoned entirely, then again with only the top-button of the coat buttoned, and finding that I looked most elegant. Afterwards, though I felt rather ashamed of showing my great joy, I could not forbear going to the stables and to the coach-house; I looked at Krassavchik, Kousma, and the droshki; then I returned again, and continued to walk about the rooms, looking into the looking-glasses and counting the money in my pocket, smiling happily all the time. However, before an hour was over, I felt weary and sorry that there was nobody to see me in all my splendour, and I felt a longing for exercise and activity. Therefore, I ordered the horse to be harnessed, and resolved to drive to Kuznetski-Most † to make some purchases.

I recollected that Volodja, on entering the university, had bought some lithographic pictures of horses by Victor Adam, some tobacco, and several pipes, and I thought it absolutely necessary for me to do the same.

* A celebrated restaurant.

† Kuznetski-Most (the Smith's [Bridge]), the name of the principal street in Moscow.

I drove up the street, the people all looking at me, and the sun shining bright upon my buttons, upon the cockade of my hat and my sword, and stopped at Daziaro's magazine. Looking round in all directions, I stepped in. I did not intend to buy Victor Adam's horses, so as not to be accused of aping Volodja, but feeling quite ashamed of the trouble I gave the shopmen, hastened to choose something, and so took a female head painted in water-colours, which stood in the window, and paid twenty roubles for it. Yet, though I had paid twenty roubles, I felt no less ashamed of troubling two such handsomely-dressed shopmen for such a trifle, and at the same time found that they looked at me rather too indifferently. Wishing to let them see what a grand gentleman I was, I next directed my attention to a silver object which lay in the glass case, and being told it was a port-crayon, which cost eighteen roubles, I asked them to wrap it up in paper, and having paid the money, and being informed that good pipes and tobacco were to be had at the tobacconist's next door, I politely bowed to both shopmen, and went out with the picture under my arm. In the neighbouring shop, on the signboard of which there was a picture of a negro smoking a cigar, I bought, in order not to be accused of imitating others, not Joukow's tobacco, but Sultan tobacco, a Turkish pipe, and two lime-tree and rosewood tubes. On coming out of the shop and going towards my droshki, I saw Semenoff, who, with his head bent, was walking quickly along the footpath. I was annoyed that he did not recognise me. I said rather loudly: 'Drive up!' and seating myself in the droshki, overtook Semenoff.

‘ Good-day to you,’ said I to him.

‘ My compliments to you,’ replied he, walking along.

‘ How is it you are not in uniform ?’ asked I.

Semenoff stopped, showing his white teeth and screwing up his eyes as if it pained him to look at the sun, but in fact in order to show himself indifferent to my droshki and the uniform : he looked at me without saying a word, and walked on.

From Kuznetski-Most I drove to the confectioner’s on the Tverskaja Street, and although trying to look as if I were chiefly interested in reading the papers, I could not help eating one sweet-cake after the other. Though I was ashamed to see that a gentleman kept looking at me with curiosity over his newspaper, I quickly devoured eight cakes one after the other.

When I came home I felt rather sick ; but without paying any attention to that, I went to contemplate my purchases ; the picture displeased me so much that I would not put it into a frame nor hang it up in my room, as Volodja had hung his, but carefully put it away behind the drawers, where nobody could see it. The port-crayon did not please me at home, either ; I put it into my desk, consoling myself, however, with the idea that it was silver—a capital thing, and a very useful one for a student. As to the smoking articles, I resolved to use them at once and to try them.

Opening the quarter-pound packet, I carefully filled the Turkish pipe with the reddish-yellow, finely cut, Sultan tobacco, put a hot tinder on it, and taking the tube between the middle and fourth finger (I liked

this position of the hand particularly), I began to inhale the smoke.

The smell of the tobacco was very pleasant, but it left a bitter taste in my mouth and made me lose my breath. However, summoning up all my courage, I kept on drawing in the smoke, for some time trying to make the smoke curl up in rings, and to inhale it. The room was soon filled with bluish clouds of smoke, the pipe began to rattle, the hot tobacco rose in whirlwinds; but I felt a bitter taste in my mouth, and my head felt quite giddy. I was already about to give it up, and only wanted to see myself first in the looking-glass with the pipe in my mouth, when, to my astonishment, I could not stand firmly on my feet; the room went round, and looking in the mirror, which I approached with great difficulty, I saw that my face was as white as a sheet. I had only time to throw myself on the sofa, when I felt so sick and weak that, fancying the pipe to be fatal—it seemed to me that I was dying; I was seriously frightened, and thought of calling for help and sending for a doctor.

However, this feeling of terror did not last long. I soon understood what was really the matter with me, and with a dreadful headache, and feeling quite weak, I remained for a long time on the sofa, gazing vacantly at the arms, printed on the quarter-pound packet of tobacco, at the pipe on the floor, at the cigarette-ends lying about, at the remains of the pastry and cakes; and, with a feeling of disappointment, I said to myself: 'It seems I am not yet quite a grown-up man, if I cannot smoke as others do; it is

evidently not my fate to do as others do—to hold a pipe between the middle and fourth finger, inhaling the smoke and puffing out whiffs from between light-coloured mustachios.'

When Dimitri came to fetch me at five o'clock, he found me in this unpleasant state. After having drunk a glass of water, however, I was almost right again, and was ready to go with him.

'And what pleasure do you find in smoking?' said he, looking at the signs which betrayed my late endeavours. 'It is all nonsense and waste of money. I have pledged my word to myself never to smoke. . . . However, let us be off, for we must go and fetch Doubkoff.'

CHAPTER XIV.

IN WHAT THE OCCUPATIONS OF VOLODJA AND DOUBKOFF CONSISTED.

AS soon as Dimitri entered my room, by his face, his gait, and a habit he had, when in low spirits, of winking with his eye, and inclining his head on one side in an awkward manner, as if he were adjusting his neck-tie, I could see that he was in that cool, obstinate humour which used to come over him when he was displeased with himself, and which always used to have a cooling effect upon my sentiments towards him. Lately I had already begun to examine closer and to analyze my friend's character, but all this did not alter our friendship in the least: our friendship was so young and strong that, whatever view I might

take of Dimitri, I could not help thinking him perfect. There were two different men in him, both of them excellent in my opinion. The one, whom I loved with all my heart, was good, kind, meek, lively, and conscious of these amiable qualities. When he used to be in this mood, his appearance, the sound of his voice, all his movements seemed to say: 'I am meek and virtuous; I am enjoying my meekness and virtue, and you all see it.' The other, whom I only now began to understand, and before whose stateliness I bowed, was a cool man, rigid towards himself and others, proud, religious to fanaticism, and pedantically moral. At the present minute he was this second self.

With the frankness which was the indispensable condition of our relations I told him, when we had taken our seats in the droshki, that I was very sorry to see him in that dull, unpleasant mood on a day that was such a happy one for me.

'Something must have grieved you. Why will you not tell me what it is?' asked I.

'Nicholas,' replied he slowly, turning his head nervously to one side and winking, 'when once I have given you my word never to conceal anything from you, you have no right to suspect me of doing so. One cannot always be in the same mood, and if anything has put me out, I really do not myself know what it is.'

'What a wonderfully open, honest disposition!' thought I, and did not speak to him any more.

We arrived in silence at Doubkoff's house. His rooms were remarkably pretty, as it seemed to me.

There were carpets, pictures, curtains, different-coloured tapestry, portraits, armchairs, easy-chairs; on the walls hung guns, pistols, tobacco-bags, and some cartoon heads of animals. As soon as I saw that room, it grew clear to me whom Volodja had imitated in the decoration of his room. We found Doubkoff and Volodja at cards. A stranger (probably an unimportant person, judging by his reserved attitude) sat beside the table, attentively watching the game. Doubkoff was in a silk dressing-gown and soft shoes. Volodja sat opposite to him on the sofa, without his coat, and, judging by his red face and the displeased glance with which he looked up for a second at us, was much interested in the game. Seeing me, he grew still redder in the face.

‘Well, it is thy turn to deal,’ said he to Doubkoff.

I could see that he was displeased at my knowing that he played at cards. But his face did not express any confusion; it seemed to say: ‘Yes, I play at cards; and thou art surprised simply because thou art still so young. It is not only right, but indispensable, to do so at our age.’

I immediately felt that it was true, and understood his thoughts.

Doubkoff, however, did not deal; he rose, shook hands with us, gave us seats, and offered us pipes, which we refused.

‘There he is, our diplomatist, the author of the feast,’ said Doubkoff. ‘By Jove! he looks very much like a colonel!’

‘Hm!’ muttered I, feeling again that stupid self-conceited smile spreading over my face.

I respected Doubkoff as only a boy of sixteen could respect an adjutant of twenty-seven, whom all people called a most orderly young man, who danced perfectly, spoke French, and who, though in his heart despising my youth, evidently tried to conceal that he did so.

Notwithstanding the esteem I entertained for him, during all the time of our acquaintance I found it difficult and uncomfortable, for some unaccountable reason, to look into his eyes. But I afterwards noticed that there were three kinds of people into whose eyes I did not feel it easy to look: those who were greatly inferior to me, those who were greatly superior to me, and those with whom we could not make up our minds to tell each other anything which both of us knew. Perhaps Doubkoff was superior, perhaps inferior to me; but it is certain that he often told untruths, never admitting the fact. However, I had noticed that defect in him, but of course could not make up my mind to tell him of it.

‘Let us have one more deal,’ said Volodja, shrugging his shoulders as father used to do, and shuffling the cards.

‘Don’t worry me!’ said Doubkoff; ‘we shall finish the game afterwards. Well, then, after all, let us have one more deal.’

While they were playing, I watched their hands. Volodja had a large, well-shaped hand: the joints of his thumb and the bend of the other fingers, when he held the cards in his hand, were so like father’s that it occurred to me that Volodja held his hand thus for the purpose of resembling a grown-up man; but on

looking at his face, I could see instantly that he was not thinking of anything but the cards. Doubkoff, on the contrary, had small, plump hands, bent inwards, extremely alert-looking, and with soft fingers ; that is to say, the kind of hand on which rings are worn, and which belongs to persons skilful in the use of their hands, and who are fond of possessing pretty things.

Probably Volodja was losing, for the gentleman, looking into his cards, made the remark that Voldemar Petrovitch was awfully unlucky ; and Doubkoff, getting out his pocket-book, made an entry in it, and showing the note he had made in the book to Volodja, asked :

‘ Is it so ?’

‘ Quite right,’ said Volodja, looking with feigned abstraction at the book. ‘ Now let us go.’

Volodja went with Doubkoff ; Dimitri took me in his vehicle.

‘ What game did they play ?’ asked I, addressing Dimitri.

‘ Piquet. A stupid game ; indeed, it is always stupid to play cards.’

‘ And do they play high ?’

‘ No ; but it is wrong all the same.’

‘ Do you not play ?’

‘ No, I gave my word never to play ; and Doubkoff always wins.’

‘ But that is very wrong of him,’ said I. ‘ I suppose Volodja does not play as well as he does ?’

‘ Of course it is wrong ; but there is nothing particularly bad in it. Doubkoff likes to play, and

knows how to play; and on the whole he is an excellent fellow.'

'But I did not mean . . .' said I.

'And no one ought to think any harm of him, for he is indeed a splendid fellow. And I am fond of him, and always shall be, notwithstanding his weakness.'

For some reason it seemed to me, just because Dimitri took the part of Doubkoff so eagerly, that he did not like him and did not feel any esteem for him, but would not admit it out of obstinacy, and in order not to give anybody the right to accuse him of inconstancy. He was one of those people who love their friends for life, not exactly for the reason that these friends are always lovable, but because, if they once like a man, they consider it dishonest to cease loving him.

CHAPTER XV.

I RECEIVE THE CONGRATULATIONS OF MY FRIENDS.

DOUBKOFF and Volodja knew all the people at Yar's by name, and all from the porter to the proprietor treated them with great respect. We were immediately ushered into a separate room, and a wonderfully fine dinner, chosen by Doubkoff from the French bill of fare, was served up. A bottle of champagne, at which I tried to look as indifferently as possible, was already prepared. The dinner was very pleasant and lively, although Doubkoff, as usual, told many strange stories, relating them as facts; as, for instance, that his grandmother had killed three highwaymen

with a musket when the latter had attacked her. Here I blushed, and, casting down my eyes, turned away from him. Volodja looked rather nervous every time I began to speak, but he had no need to fear, for I did not say anything to be ashamed of as far as I remember. When the champagne was served all wished me joy, and we drank 'Bruderschaft,'* as the Germans say, interwining our arms and kissing each other. As I did not know whose the bottle of champagne was (it belonged to us all, as I was afterwards told), and wished to stand my friends some from my own money, which I was incessantly fingering in my pocket, I quietly took out a ten-rouble note, and, calling the waiter, I gave him the money, and in a whisper that was perfectly audible, for all were looking at me in silence, told him to be kind enough to bring just a half-bottle of champagne more. Volodja blushed, looking both ashamed and frightened, so that I felt I had made a mistake, but the half-bottle was brought, and we emptied it with great pleasure. The evening continued to be very merry. Doubkoff went on telling his stories, and Volodja also said such funny things, and said them much better than I had expected of him, that we laughed a great deal, their wit—that is, Volodja and Doubkoff's—consisting in imitating and amplifying the well-known anecdote. 'Have you been abroad?' asks one. 'No, I have not,' answers the other; 'but my brother plays the violin.' In this kind of comical nonsense they reached such a pitch of perfection that one of them even made this

* 'Brotherhood,' a toast which pledged us to a mutual friendship.

very witty reply: 'My brother never played the violin, either.' They answered every question in a similar way, or, without any questions or answers, managed to combine two most incongruously absurd things, saying it all with grave faces, which made what they said still more laughable. I began to understand in what the fun lay, and wished to say something comical too; but all looked queerly at me, or tried not to look at me at all, while I was speaking, so my anecdote fell quite flat. Doubkoff said: 'You are talking at random, my young diplomatist'; but I felt so elated by the champagne I had drunk, and by being in company with grown-up men, that this remark affected me but slightly. Dimitri alone, though he had taken just as much wine as we had, continued in his rigid, serious humour, which to some extent checked the general merriment.

'Now then, listen, gentlemen,' said Doubkoff. 'After dinner, of course, we must take the diplomatist into our hands. Let us go to "auntie's," and take him there too.'

'But Neklioudoff won't go,' said Volodja.

'What an unbearably meek-minded person, thou abominable meek man!' said Doubkoff, addressing him. 'Come along with us; thou wilt see that "auntie" is an excellent lady.'

'I shall not go, neither shall I let him go,' replied Dimitri, reddening.

'Whom—the diplomatist? But wouldn't you like to go, diplomatist? Look how his eyes brighten at the mere mention of "auntie."'

'It is not that I shall not let him go,' continued

Dimitri, rising from his seat and walking up and down the room without looking at me ; ‘but I advise him not to go ; I should not like him to do so. He is no child any longer, and if he wish, he can go there by himself without you, and you ought to be ashamed of yourself, Doubkoff ; when you do wrong, you want others to do the same.’

‘What is there wrong,’ said Doubkoff winking at Volodja, ‘in my inviting you all to come to “auntie’s” for a cup of tea ? But if it does not please you, all right. We shall go with Volodja. Volodja, wilt thou come ?’

‘H’m, h’m !’ said Volodja affirmatively ; ‘let us take a drive there, and then we can come back to my place and continue our game at piquet.’

‘Well, dost thou want to go with them or not ?’ said Dimitri, stepping up to me.

‘No,’ said I, moving on the sofa, so as to give him a seat close to me, which he took ; ‘I do not care about it, and if thou advisest me not, I shall certainly not go.’

‘No,’ added I, after a moment’s silence ; ‘it would not be the truth were I to say I have no wish to go with them ; yet I am very glad that I am not going.’

‘Excellent,’ said he ; ‘it is always best to live according to our own tastes, and not to be at anybody’s beck and call.’

This little quarrel did not disturb our pleasure, but even increased it. Dimitri’s mood suddenly changed to the meek one I liked in him. As I afterwards often noticed, the consciousness of having performed a good action always had a similar effect upon him.

He was pleased with himself for having saved me. He became extremely merry, ordered another bottle of champagne (which was against his principles), brought a strange gentleman into our room, and began to treat him, sang *Gaudeamus igitur*, asked us all to join him, and proposed to take a drive to Sokolniki*—a proposal that Doubkoff found rather ‘too sentimental,’ as he said.

‘Let us enjoy ourselves to-day,’ said Dimitri, smiling; ‘in honour of his having entered the university I shall get tipsy for the first time.’ This merry mood suited Dimitri particularly well. He was like a tutor or a kind father, who, pleased with his children, gets quite merry with them, and at the same time proves that one can enjoy one’s self both honestly and decently. Nevertheless, his sudden joyousness acted infectiously upon me and the others—the more so as each of us had already drunk almost half a bottle of champagne.

In such pleasant spirits, I went out into the large room in order to light a cigarette, which had been given me by Doubkoff.

As I rose from my seat, I noticed that my head went round a little, and that my feet moved and my hands kept their natural position only when I fixedly thought of them. Otherwise, my feet seemed to be slipping to one side or the other, while my hands moved about awkwardly. I directed all my attention to them, ordered my hands to button my coat and to smooth my hair (in doing which my elbows rose awfully high), forced my feet to pass through the

* Sokolniki, a fine park in the environs of Moscow.

door, which they did, stepping rather too firmly, or too gently, especially my left foot, which stood on tip-toe all the time. A voice shouted to me :

Where are you going? Wait till they bring a candle.'

I recognised the voice to be Volodja's, and the idea that I had found this out pleased me; but in reply to him I only smiled slightly and went on.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE QUARREL.

IN the large room sat a robust gentleman of small stature, with reddish moustache, at a small table, eating something. Beside him sat a tall, dark, beardless gentleman. They were talking French. Their looks confused me, yet I resolved to light my cigarette at the burning candle that stood before them. Looking on all sides, in order to avoid meeting their gaze, I approached the table to light the cigarette. When it was lighted, I could not refrain from looking at the gentleman who was dining. His gray eyes were fixed malevolently upon me. I was about to turn away, when his red moustache began to move, and he said in French: 'Sir, I do not like anybody to smoke when I am having my dinner.'

I muttered something rather incomprehensible.

'Yes, sir, I do not like it,' sternly continued the gentleman with the moustache, casting a fugitive look at the beardless gentleman, as if inviting him to notice the way in which he would settle me: 'I do

not like it, nor do I like those who are so unmannerly as to come and puff smoke into a gentleman's face—I do not like it, sir.'

I immediately understood that the gentleman was giving me a scolding, and at first it seemed to me that I was very much in the wrong.

'I did not think it would disturb you,' said I.

'Oh, you did not think that you were very rude, but I think so!' shouted the gentleman.

'What right have you to shout thus?' said I, feeling that he had insulted me, and getting angry myself.

'I have the right never to allow anybody to behave thus towards me, and shall always give a lesson to lads like you. What is your name, sir? and where do you live?'

I got very angry; my lips trembled and my breath failed me. But yet I felt myself in the wrong, somehow, perhaps for having drunk too much champagne, and did not say anything rude to the gentleman, but, on the contrary, my lips most humbly gave my name and address.

'My name is Kolpikoff, sir, and I request you will be more polite in future. You shall hear from me shortly' ('Vous aurez de mes nouvelles'), added he, the conversation having been carried on in French.

I only said 'Very pleased,' trying to make my voice firm, turned round, and with the cigarette, which by this time had gone out, in my mouth, returned to our room.

I did not mention what had happened to me either to my brother or to my friends, the more so as they were engaged in an eager discussion. I took a

seat in the corner, deliberating on the strange affair. The words 'You are rude, sir' ('Un mal élevé, monsieur'), were sounding in my ears, rousing my indignation more and more. I had totally recovered from my inebriety. When I pondered over the way I had acted in this affair, the awful thought suddenly struck me that I had acted like a coward. What right had he to insult me? Why did not he simply say that it annoyed him? Consequently he was in the wrong? Why then, when he called me rude, did I not say to him, 'A rude person, sir, is one that takes the liberty to be impertinent'? or why did I not simply shout out, 'Hold your tongue!' It would have been a very good thing; why didn't I challenge him? No! I did nothing of the kind, but bore the insult like a mean coward. 'You are rude, sir,' continually sounded provokingly in my ears. 'No, I cannot leave the matter thus,' thought I, and rose with the firm intention of going again to the gentleman and saying something dreadful to him; perhaps flinging a candle at his head, if I could manage to do so. I thought of doing so with delight; but it was not without trepidation that I again entered the large room. Fortunately, Mr. Kolpikoff had already left; a waiter was alone in the room, clearing the table. I felt inclined to tell the waiter what had happened, and to explain to him that I had not been wrong in the least, but I changed my mind, and returned to our room in a most gloomy state of mind.

'What is the matter with our diplomatist?' said Doubkoff; 'he is probably deciding the fate of Europe.'

‘Oh, leave me alone, do!’ said I surlily, turning away.

After this, I commenced walking up and down the room, and somehow began to think that Doubkoff was not at all a good fellow. ‘And what do his endless jokes mean? and, then, why is he always calling me “diplomatist”? There is nothing amiable in that. He only cares about winning money from Volodja at cards, and going to see some “auntie.” . . . There is nothing nice about him. Everything he says is either a lie or something silly; and, then, he is so fond of laughing at people. It seems to me that he is nothing but a fool, and a bad man besides.’ I sat musing thus for about five minutes, and the longer I thought about Doubkoff, the more inimical did my feelings towards him become. Doubkoff, however, paid no attention to me—a circumstance that annoyed me still more. I even felt angry with Volodja and Dimitri for talking with him.

‘I say, gentlemen, we must pour some water over the diplomatist,’ suddenly said Doubkoff, looking at me with a smile, which seemed to me a mocking and even a perfidious one; ‘he is top-heavy! By Jove, he is!’

‘You want a ducking yourself; you are no better yourself,’ said I, with an angry smile, forgetting that we had agreed to say ‘thou’ to each other.

My answer must have surprised him; but he turned away from me with an air of indifference, and went on talking with Volodja and Dimitri.

I tried to take part in their conversation, but I felt that I could not possibly feign friendship, and again

went to my corner, where I remained until the very moment of my departure.

When we went to put on our over-coats, after having settled the account, Doubkoff addressed Dimitri: 'Well, and where will Orestes and Pylades go? I suppose they will go home to talk about *love*, and we shall go and visit our dear "auntie"—that's better than sour friendship.'

'How dare you say so, or laugh at us?' said I suddenly, stepping very close to him and waving my arms; 'how dare you laugh at feelings which you do not understand? I shall not let you do so. Hold your tongue!' shouted I, and stopped myself, not knowing what to say further, and losing my breath from emotion. Doubkoff was surprised at first; then he tried to smile as if it were a joke, and then, to my great astonishment, he looked frightened and cast down his eyes.

'I am not laughing at you or your feelings at all. I was only joking,' said he evasively.

'Oh, indeed!' shouted I; but at that time a feeling of shame for myself and pity for Doubkoff, whose red, confused face expressed real pain, came over me.

'What is the matter with you?' said Volodja and Dimitri together; 'nobody had any idea of insulting you.'

'Yes, he did—he wanted to insult me!'

'What a desperate fellow your brother is!' said Doubkoff, just as he was going out at the door, so as not to hear my answer.

I should, perhaps, have run after him, and should again have said something harsh to him, if the waiter,

who had witnessed my affair with Kolpikoff, had not just then given me my coat. I instantly grew calm, only keeping up a pretence of being angry before Dimitri just sufficient to prevent my sudden calmness from appearing strange to him. On the next day I met Doubkoff at Volodja's; we did not mention the affair at all, but again said 'you' to each other, and it became still more awkward for us to meet each other's eyes.

The remembrance of my quarrel with Kolpikoff, who, by-the-bye, did *not* turn up and did not give me *de ses nouvelles*, remained very fresh and vivid in my mind for many a year. I could not help uttering a groan for five years afterwards every time I remembered the unavenged insult, and only consoled myself by self-conceitedly remembering what a courageous fellow I had shown myself, on the other hand, in the affair with Doubkoff. It was not for a considerable time afterwards that I began to look upon the matter in a different light, recollected my quarrel with Kolpikoff with a kind of comical pleasure, and repented of the undeserved abuse I had given *that good fellow* Doubkoff.

When, on the evening of the same day, I told Dimitri about my adventure with Kolpikoff, whose appearance I minutely described to him, he was amazed.

'The same man!' exclaimed he; 'only think, this Kolpikoff is a notorious scoundrel and cheat, and a coward besides, who was expelled from the regiment by his brother officers, because he had his ears boxed and refused to challenge the man who had struck

him. How did he manage to pluck up his courage, I wonder?' added he, with a kind smile, looking at me. 'But he did not say anything to you except "Rude fellow!" did he?'

'Yes, he did!' replied I, blushing.

'That is a bad job; well—but never mind!' said Dimitri soothingly.

It was not for a considerable time afterwards, on quietly considering the circumstance, that I came to a fairly just conclusion—viz., that Kolpikoff, feeling that I might be attacked with impunity, had avenged upon me the insult he had received in the presence of the dark gentleman with moustaches, in the same way as I, immediately afterwards, had avenged his expression of 'Rude fellow!' upon the innocent Doubkoff.

CHAPTER XVII.

I PREPARE TO MAKE SEVERAL CALLS.

WHEN I awoke the next morning, my first thought was about my adventure with Kolpikoff; again I groaned, and began pacing up and down the room, but there was nothing to be done; besides, it was my last day in Moscow, and my father had desired me to pay several visits, and had himself written down a list of the people upon whom I ought to call. My father was not as anxious about our morals or our education as about our observing the laws of good-breeding. On the paper was written, in his broken, rapid handwriting: 'I. Prince Ivan Ivanovitch, by all means;

2. Ivins, by all means; 3. Prince Michael; 4. Princess Nekliofudoff and Valahins, if you have time; and, of course, the president, the rector, and the professors.'

Dimitri did not advise me to pay the latter visits, saying that it was not only unnecessary, but would not even be the correct thing, but all the other visits had to be paid that day. The two first, to which the words 'by all means' were adjoined, made me feel nervous. Prince Ivan Ivanovitch was a general-in-chief, an old man, wealthy, and quite alone; so that I, a student of sixteen, would have to be with him on terms which I felt beforehand could not be flattering to me. The Ivins were also wealthy people, and their father was a general, and had called upon us only once, when grandmother was alive. After the death of our grandmother, I noticed that the younger Ivin avoided us, and seemed to be giving himself airs. The eldest, as I was told, had already finished his course of jurisprudence, and was in St. Petersburg; the second, Sergius, whom I had formerly almost worshipped, was also in Petersburg, a tall plump cadet in the corps des pages.

In my youth I not only disliked having anything to do with people who considered themselves my superiors, but even found it intolerably disagreeable, for I was constantly afraid of having my feelings wounded, and had to strain all my mental powers in order to prove my independence. However, as I was not going to pay all the visits my father had enjoined me to do, this had to be atoned for by my paying the three first immediately. I was walking about the

room examining my clothes, which were spread out on chairs, my sword and hat were ready, when old Grap came to me with his congratulations, bringing Iliinka with him. Mr. Grap was a Russianized German, unbearably fawning, flattering, and very often flushed with wine; he usually visited us only for the purpose of asking for something, and my father sometimes invited him to his private room, but he never was asked to dine at our table. His humility and constant habit of begging went hand-in-hand with so much external kind-heartedness and attachment to our house, that all believed him to be really attached to us; but for some reason or other I did not like him, and when he spoke, always felt ashamed for his sake.

I was greatly displeased with the arrival of these visitors, and did not even try to conceal my displeasure. I was so accustomed to look down upon Iliinka, and he was so used to consider that we had a right to do so, that it was rather disagreeable to me to remember that he, too, was a student. It seemed to me that he also felt somewhat ashamed of this equality. I coolly shook hands with my visitors without offering them a seat; I felt ashamed to do so, thinking that they could take a seat just as well without my saying anything, and ordered my horse to be harnessed. Iliinka was a kind-hearted, very honest, and very clever young fellow, but he was what may be called a whimsical man; he always seemed to be in some extremity without any ostensible reason—either ready to weep, or to laugh, or to be put out by any trifle; now he seemed to be in the

last state. He did not speak, but looked crossly at me and at his father, and it was only when addressed that he smiled a humble, constrained smile, as he was in the habit of doing, in order to conceal his feelings, and especially the feeling of shame for his father which he could not help experiencing in our presence.

‘So, so, Nicolas Petrovitch,’ said the old man, addressing me, following me up and down the room while I was dressing, and deferentially and slowly twisting and turning about in his plump fingers a silver snuff-box, given him as a present by my grandmother. As soon as ever I heard from my son of your having passed such a brilliant examination—but, then, we all know how clever you are—I came up to wish you joy, sir ; I used to carry you about on my shoulder, and God knows that I love you all as if you were relations of mine, and my Iliinka has been longing to see you. He also is so fond of you all.’

All this time Iliinka sat silently at the window, as if contemplating my three-cornered hat, and muttering something angrily to himself.

‘Then I wanted to ask you, Nicolas Petrovitch,’ continued the old man, ‘how my Iliinka underwent his examination. He told me he would be your fellow-student ; pray be kind to him, look after him, and help him with your advice.’

‘Indeed, he has passed splendidly,’ replied I, casting a look at Iliinka, who, feeling that I was looking at him, blushed and ceased moving his lips.

‘And may he spend the day with you ?’ said the

old man with a timid smile, as if he were very much afraid of me, and yet following me so closely wherever I went, and keeping so near me, that the smell of wine and tobacco, in which he was entirely steeped, did not leave me for a second. I felt vexed with him, both for having placed me in a false position towards his son, and for having drawn my attention from a most important item in my estimation—viz., my dressing; but the chief reason was that the smell of wine and smoke, with which his whole person seemed impregnated, put me out, and I answered, coldly, that I could not ask Iliinka to stay, as I was going out for the whole day.

‘But you wanted to go and see my sister, father,’ said Iliinka, smiling and not looking at me; ‘and I have something to do, too.’ I felt still more angry, still more ashamed of myself, and as if to soften my refusal, hastily said that I could not be at home, because I had to call upon *Prince* Ivan Ivanovitch, *Princess* Kornakoff, Mr. Ivin, who held an important office in the state, and that I should probably dine at the *Princess* Neklioudoff’s. I supposed, on hearing what grand people I was going to see, my visitors could not take umbrage at my leaving them. When they were going away, I asked Iliinka to come and see me some other day, but he only muttered a few inaudible words with a constrained smile. It was evident to me that he would never darken my doors again.

As soon as they were gone, I started on my rounds. I had that morning asked Volodja to come with me; I should then have felt much more at my ease, but he

refused, under the pretext that it would be much too touching a thing for two brothers to go driving together in the same gig.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE VALAHINS.

SO I set off alone. The first visit that lay in my route was to the Valahins, in Sivtzy-Vrajek. I had not seen Sonitchka for the last three years, and my love for her had, of course, ceased long ago, yet there was still in my heart a lively and feeling remembrance of my past, childish love. It had happened more than once, in the course of these three years, that thoughts of her had returned to me with such force and clearness that I had actually shed tears, and felt that again I loved her; but the feeling had been but a transitory one, and did not often recur.

I had heard that Sonitchka had been abroad with her mother; that they had spent about two years there; that a stage-coach had been overturned as they were travelling, and the glass of the window-pane had cut Sonitchka's face, so that she was not as pretty as she had been. As I was driving along, I thought of Sonitchka such as she had been when last I saw her, and how I should find her looking now. I do not know why I expected, after her two years' residence abroad, to find her extremely tall, with a fine figure, a grave and stately manner, but with something wonderfully attractive about her. My imagination refused to picture her to myself with disfiguring scars

on her face ; or, rather, having heard somewhere of a passionate lover who had remained faithful to his love after she had been all scarred by small-pox, I tried to persuade myself that I was still in love with Sonitchka, in order to have the merit of being faithful to her in spite of her scars. Driving to the house, though not in love, I tried hard to rouse my former feelings—was ready to love her again and longed to do so ; the more so as I felt very much ashamed of being behind-hand with my friends, who had each some attachment of the kind.

The Valahins lived in a small, clean-looking wooden house in a court-yard. When I had rung the bell, a rarity in Moscow in those days, the door was opened by a tiny, neatly-dressed boy. He did not know, or he would not tell me, whether his mistress was at home, and leaving me alone in the dark entrance hall, he ran into a still darker passage.

I remained for some time in the dark hall, in which, besides the street-door and the one leading into the passage, there was another door, which was closed, and partly wondering at the gloomy appearance of the house, partly supposing that it was just what it ought to be in the dwellings of people who had been abroad. About five minutes had elapsed, when the door of the principal hall was opened from the inside by the same boy, and he led me into a tidy, though not richly furnished, reception-room, where I found Sonitchka.

She was seventeen. She was short of stature, very thin, and her complexion was sallow and sickly. There were no scars to be seen on her face, but the

beautiful large eyes and the bright, kind-hearted, cheerful smile were the same I had known and loved in my boyhood. I had not expected to find her as she was, and therefore I was by no means able to pour out the feelings which I had prepared on my way. She offered me her hand in the English way, which at that time was just as rare as the bell, pressed my hand frankly, and offered me a seat beside her.

‘Oh, how glad I am to see you, dear Nicolas!’ said she, looking into my face with such a sincere expression of joy, that in the words ‘dear Nicolas’ I noticed a friendly, and not a patronizing, tone.

I was amazed to find that after her travels abroad she had become still more simple, more amiable, and more friendly in her manners than before. I noticed two slight scars about her nose and on one eyebrow; but the charming eyes and the smile were just as I remembered them, and they were as bright as they had been.

‘How you have altered!’ said she; ‘you are quite grown up. But I—how do you find me?’

‘Oh, I shouldn’t have recognised you!’ answered I, thinking at the same time that I should always have recognised her.

I was again in the carelessly-jovial humour of five years ago, when I had danced with her at the ball given by her grandmother.

‘Have I grown so very ugly, then?’ asked she, shaking her head.

‘No, not at all; you have grown a little, you are older,’ I hastened to reply. ‘But, on the contrary . . . and even . . .’

‘Well, never mind. But do you recollect our dances and games—St. Jerome, Madame Dorat?’ (I did not recollect any Madame Dorat; she was evidently carried away by the delight of her recollections of our childhood, and had confused them). ‘Oh, it was a glorious time!’ continued she, and I saw the same smile, even more charming than the one I had kept in my memory, and the same eyes were shining brightly before me.

While she was talking, I had time to realize the state I was in at that minute, and I settled in my mind that I was in love. The very moment I felt convinced of that, my happy, careless spirits left me; a mist spread over all—even over her eyes and her smile—and I felt somewhat ashamed; I blushed, and was unable to utter a word.

‘Now times are changed,’ continued she, sighing, and raising her eyebrows a little; ‘everything is worse, and we are worse ourselves—are we not, Nicolas?’ I could not answer, and looked at her in silence. ‘Where are now the Ivins, the Kornakoffs? Do you remember?’ continued she, looking with some curiosity at my blushing, frightened face. ‘It was a fine time!’

I was unable to answer a word.

From this depressed state I was relieved for a time by old Mrs. Valahin, who entered the room. I rose, bowed, and recovered the use of my tongue; but, on the other hand, upon the entrance of her mother, a strange change took place in Sonitchka. All her cheerfulness and familiarity vanished suddenly, even her smile changed, and all at once she changed into the dignified, stately young lady who had arrived from

abroad—just what I had expected to find her. It seemed impossible to account for such a sudden change, for her mother was smiling pleasantly, and her manners were just as kind as they had been. Mrs. Valahin took a seat on the big armchair, and motioned me to take a seat near her. She said something in English to her daughter, and Sonitchka left the room ; this made me feel more at my ease. Mrs. Valahin inquired after my relations, my brother, my father ; then she told me about her grief—the loss of her husband ; then at last, seeing there was nothing else to talk about, she silently looked at me, as if to say, ‘ It would be a good thing if you were now to rise, say good-bye, and go.’ But a strange circumstance happened just then. Sonitchka had re-entered the room with some needlework, and had taken a seat in the other corner of the reception-room, so that I felt her eyes upon me. While Mrs. Valahin was telling me about the loss of her husband, I remembered once more that I was in love, and thought that the mother very likely guessed it too ; and I again fell into such a fit of bashfulness, that I felt unable to move any one of my limbs naturally. I knew that in order to rise and to leave I should have to think where I was to put my feet, what I was to do with my head, with my hands—in short, I felt almost as I had done the day before, after having drunk half a bottle of champagne. I saw clearly that I should be unable to get out of the room without awkwardness, and therefore did not rise—in fact, I *could* not rise. Mrs. Valahin was probably wondering why I did not go, while looking at my red face

and my immovability. But I resolved to remain in that absurd position, rather than risk rising awkwardly. I remained in this position pretty long, expecting some unforeseen circumstance to help me out of the dilemma. The circumstance presented itself in the personage of a very plain young man, who familiarly entered the room and bowed politely to me. Mrs. Valahin rose, apologizing that she had to speak with her 'homme d'affairs,' and looked at me with a perplexed expression, as much as to say, 'Well, if you are inclined to sit for ever, I cannot turn you out.' I rose at last with a great effort, but was perfectly unable to make my bow, and walking out, followed by the pitying looks of both mother and daughter, I stumbled against a chair which did *not* stand in my way at all, simply because all my attention was directed towards the carpet, being afraid to catch my feet in it. In the fresh air, however, after giving myself a shake, and groaning so loud that even Kousma asked me several times, 'What were you pleased to say, sir?' the feeling was dispelled, and I began to think more calmly of my love for Sonitchka, and of the terms on which she seemed to stand with her mother, and which appeared rather strange to me. When I afterwards told my father what I thought of the bad terms on which Mrs. Valahin and her daughter were, he said :

'Yes, she torments the poor girl by her dreadful stinginess; and how strange it is!' added he, with more feeling than could have been excited by a sentiment of relationship alone. 'What a charming, amiable, beautiful woman she used to be! I cannot

make out why she has changed thus. Have you seen a secretary of hers there? And what an idea for a Russian lady to have a secretary!' said he, angrily turning away from me.

'I have seen him,' replied I.

'And is he handsome, at any rate?'

'No, not even good-looking.'

'It is incomprehensible,' said father angrily, shrugging his shoulders.

'There, now I am in love also,' thought I, driving along in my droshki.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE KORNAKOFFS.

THE second visit was to the Kornakoffs. They lived on the first-floor of a large house on the Arbat.* The entrance was extremely grand, and in the greatest order, though not very rich. There were narrow strips of carpeting everywhere, all fastened with cleanly polished stair-wires, but no flowers or looking-glasses. The large hall with its brightly polished floor, which I crossed in order to get to the reception-room, was also strictly, coldly and tidily furnished; everything glittered and seemed solid, though not quite new; but there were no pictures, no curtains, no ornaments to be seen anywhere. Some of the daughters were sitting in the reception-room. They sat so upright, and looked so stately, that one could

* A street in Moscow.

not help noticing it and thinking that they did not sit thus when they had no visitors to entertain.

‘Mamma will be here presently,’ said the eldest, seating herself closer to me. For about a quarter of an hour the young princess entertained me with her conversation, very freely, and so well that the talk did not flag for a second. But it was too evident that she was entertaining me, and, therefore, I did not like her. She told me, by the way, that their brother Stephen, whom they called Etienne, and who had been sent two years ago to a military school, had already become an officer. When she told me about her brother, and especially about his having entered the hussar regiment against his mother’s will, her face wore a startled look, and all the younger princesses, who were sitting silently by, looked startled too; when she spoke of the death of their grandmother, she made a mournful face, and all the younger princesses did the same; when she recollected how I once hit St. Jerome and was led out, she began to laugh, thereby showing her ugly teeth, and all the younger princesses began to laugh too, and showed their ugly teeth.

The princess-mother entered; the same short, thin woman, with restless eyes, which always used to look at others while she was talking to you. She shook hands with me, and then raised her hand to my lips in order to let me kiss it, a thing I should otherwise never have done, finding it quite unnecessary.

‘How pleased I am to see you!’ said she, in her usual way, looking at her daughter. ‘Oh, how like his mamma he is! Isn’t he, Lise?’

Lise acquiesced, though I knew perfectly well that there was not the slightest likeness between my mother and myself.

‘So now you are a grown-up man already! And my Etienne, do you remember him? but he is your second cousin . . . no, not exactly a second cousin; how is it, Lise? My mother was Varvara Dimitrievna, the daughter of Dimitri Nicolaevitch, and your grandmother was Natalia Nicolaevna.’

‘Third cousin then, mamma,’ said the eldest daughter.

‘Oh, you are always confusing things!’ exclaimed the mother angrily; ‘not second cousin at all, but “*issu de germain*”—that is how you are related to my Etienne. He is already an officer, you know? It is a pity that he has too much liberty already. You young people ought to be kept in check, so. . . . You are not angry with me, your old aunt, for telling you the truth? I was very strict with Etienne, and find that strictness is absolutely necessary.’

‘Yes, that is how we are relations,’ continued she; ‘Prince Ivan Ivanovitch is my uncle, and was your mother’s uncle. Consequently your mother and myself were cousins—no, second cousins; yes, that is it. But pray tell me, my young friend, have you called upon Prince Ivan?’

I said that I had not, but that I was going to do so that very day.

‘Oh!’ exclaimed she, ‘your first visit ought to have been to him. Do you not know that Prince Ivan is the same as a father to you? He has no children, and consequently you and my children are

his only heirs. You must respect him for his age, his position in the world, and for everything in general. I know you young people of the present age ; you think nothing of kindred ties, and do not care for old people ; but listen to me, to your old aunt, for I love you and loved your mamma, and your grandmother too—I loved and esteemed her very much indeed. Call upon him by all means ; mind you do.'

I said I should do so without fail, and as I found my visit had lasted long enough, I rose and was about to leave when she stopped me.

'No, wait a minute. Where is your father, Lise ? ask him to come here ; he will be so glad to see you,' continued she, addressing me.

Two minutes afterwards Prince Michael entered. He was a stout but not very tall man, his dress slovenly, his beard unshaven, and with an expression of indifference which made him look almost stupid. He was not at all glad to see me—at least, he did not seem to be. But the princess, of whom he was evidently very much afraid, said to him, 'Isn't Voldemar' (she had forgotten my name) 'very like his mother ?' and made a sign with her eyes, so that the prince, probably guessing what she meant, stepped up to me, and with a most apathetic, even displeased expression in his face, turned his unshaved cheek for me to kiss.

'You are not dressed yet, and you have to go out,' then said the princess to him in an angry tone, which she evidently used in addressing everyone in the family. 'You want people to be angry with you again ; you want to set everybody against you again.'

‘I shall be ready directly, directly, my dear,’ said Prince Michael, and left the room. I made my bow and left also.

I had heard for the first time that we were the heirs of Prince Ivan Ivanovitch, and the news struck me disagreeably.

CHAPTER XX.

THE IVINS.

IT became still more disagreeable to me to think that I had absolutely to call upon the prince. But before going there I had to visit the Ivins on my way. They lived on the Tverskoje, in a large handsome house. It was not without a tremor that I went up the state-staircase, at the top of which stood a porter with a mace.

I asked him whether his master and mistress were at home.

‘Whom do you wish to see? My young master is at home,’ said the porter.

‘And the general himself?’ inquired I boldly.

‘I will announce you. Your name?’ asked the porter, as he rang a bell.

The feet of a servant in gaiters appeared on the stair. I lost my courage entirely—I hardly know why—and I told the servant not to announce me to the general, that I would first go and see his son. When I went up the wide stairs I felt as if I had grown very small, not in the metaphorical, but in the true sense of this word. I had experienced the same when my droshki drove up to the fine entrance-door: it seemed to me as if the droshki, the horse, and the coachman

had decreased in size. The general's son was lying on a sofa with a book before him, and was asleep when I entered the room. His tutor, Mr. Frost, who was still in the house, walked boldly into the room immediately after me and awoke his pupil. Ivin did not show any particular pleasure on seeing me; and I noticed that, while talking with me, he did not look straight into my eyes, but looked at my eyebrows. Although he was very polite, it seemed to me that he also was trying to make talk for me, as the young princess had done; but that he did not feel any particular liking for me, and that my acquaintance was nothing to him, as he most probably had another circle of friends. I seemed to understand all this, especially by the way he looked at my eyebrows. In short, he treated me, unpleasant as it is to confess it, much the same as I treated Iliinka. My temper began to rise; I followed his every glance, and whenever his eyes met those of Frost, I interpreted the look as conveying the question: 'What has he come here for?'

After having talked a little with me, Ivin told me that his father and mother were at home, and inquired if I would not like to come with him to see them.

'I shall dress immediately,' added he, walking into the next room, though he was already very well dressed—he had on a new coat and a white waistcoat. In a few minutes he re-entered the room, and stood before me in his uniform buttoned up, and we went downstairs together. The halls which we passed were very large, high, and, it seemed, luxuriously fur-

nished : there were several marble and gold works of art, and looking-glasses, and some statues covered with muslin. At the same time Mrs. Ivin entered the small room next the reception-room, by another door. She received me in a very friendly manner, offered me a seat beside her, and inquired with much interest about our whole family.

I had seen Mrs. Ivin once or twice before, but now on looking attentively at her, I liked her appearance very much. She was tall, thin, very white, and had a sad, weary look about her. Her smile was mournful, but exceedingly kind; there was a slight squint in her large weary eyes, that gave her a sadder and more attractive expression still. She was not exactly hunch-backed, but her whole body was bent; all her movements expressed utter prostration of strength; she spoke indolently, but the sound of her voice and her distinct pronunciation of *r* and *l* were very pleasant. She did not try to entertain me. The answers I gave her regarding my relations evidently saddened her, as if, while listening to me, she recollected better times with grief. Her son left the room; for a few minutes she sat looking silently at me, then began to weep. I sat before her, and could by no means make up my mind what I was to say or do. She went on weeping without looking at me. At first I felt sorry for her; then I thought, 'Should I not try to console her, but how is it to be done?' and finally I began to feel vexed at her putting me into such an awkward position. 'Is it possible that I have such a piteous look about me?' thought I; 'or perhaps she does it on purpose to see what I shall do.'

‘To take my leave now is awkward, it would appear as if I were running away from her tears,’ was my inward comment. I moved on my seat, at least to remind her of my presence.

‘Oh, how stupid I am!’ said she, looking at me, and trying to smile; ‘there are days when one weeps without any reason.’

She began to look for her handkerchief on the sofa, and suddenly fell to weeping still more bitterly.

‘Oh dear me! how ridiculous it is of me to weep thus! I loved your mother so much; we were such great friends . . . with . . . her . . . and . . .’

She found her handkerchief, with which she covered her face, and went on weeping. Again I found myself in the same awkward position, and it lasted for a good long time. I was vexed, and at the same time sorry for her. Her tears seemed to be sincere, and yet I kept thinking all the time that she was not weeping over my mother’s death, as much as because she was feeling unhappy, and remembering that she had been much happier before. I do not know how it would have ended, if young Ivin had not come in and said that his father had asked for her. She rose, and was about to go, when Ivin himself entered the room. He was a short, robust, gray-headed man, with bushy, black eyebrows; his hair was quite gray, and cut quite short; and the expression of his mouth extremely stern and firm.

I rose and bowed to him, but Ivin, with three stars decorating his green dress-coat, not only did not return my bow, but did not even look at me, which made me suddenly feel as if I were not a human

being, but something unworthy of attention—an arm-chair or window ; or if I were a human being, then one who did not differ in the least from an arm-chair or window.

‘And you have not written to the countess all this time, my dear?’ said he to his wife in French, with an apathetic but stern expression on his face.

‘Good-bye, Mr. Irtenjeff,’ said Mrs. Ivin to me, suddenly nodding somewhat proudly to me, and looking over my eyes at my eyebrows as her son had done. I bowed once more to her and her husband ; my bow to old Ivin again having no more effect upon him than if a window had been opened or closed. Young Ivin, however, accompanied me to the door, and on the way told me that he was going to pass in the St. Petersburg University, on account of his father having got an appointment there (he named some very important post).

‘Well, my father may say what he pleases,’ muttered I to myself, getting on to my droshki ; ‘but my foot shall never enter their door again ; that lackadaisical creature keeps weeping as she looks at me, just as if I were some miserable wretch, and Ivin, the boor, does not even return my bow ; I shall teach him better manners . . .’ How I intended to do so I really did not know, but I could not help saying so to myself.

In after-days I had often to listen to my father’s exhortations, that it was indispensable to cultivate their acquaintance ; that I had no right to expect a man in Ivin’s position to talk to a boy like me ; but I kept to my resolution for some time.

CHAPTER XXI.

PRINCE IVAN IVANOVITCH.

‘WELL, now my last visit to the Nikitsky Street,’ said I to Kousma, and we drove to the house of the Prince Ivan Ivanovitch.

Having acquired more experience in paying visits, I grew more self-possessed, and while driving to the prince’s house I felt pretty cool, when I suddenly recollected the Princess Kornakoff’s words, that I was the heir ; besides which, I saw two carriages standing at the door, and immediately grew quite bashful again.

It seemed to me as if the old porter who opened the door, and the man-servant who took my cloak, and the three ladies and two gentlemen whom I found in the reception-room, and especially Prince Ivan Ivanovitch himself, who sat on the sofa, were all looking at me as an heir of his—consequently, with ill-will. The prince was very courteous to me ; he kissed me—that is to say, he touched my cheek for a second with his soft, dry, cold lips ; inquired about my studies and plans, uttered a few jokes, asking whether I still wrote poems like those which I had written for my grandmother’s name-day, and asked me to dinner. But the more courteous he was, the more I fancied that he only lavished his caresses upon me in order to conceal his displeasure at the idea that I was his heir. He had a habit, on account of the false teeth of which his mouth was full, of turning his lip up towards his nose after speaking, thus producing a

slight snuffling sound as if he were drawing the lips into his nostrils; and as he did so now, he seemed to me to be saying to himself, ' Boy, boy . . . without your telling me I know that you are my heir, my heir,' etc.

When we were children, we used to call Ivan Ivanovitch grandfather; but now, as his heir, I could not force my tongue to say ' grandfather ' to him; on the other hand, it seemed humiliating to me to say ' your excellency,' as a gentleman who was present did, so that during the whole time of the conversation I tried to avoid addressing him by any name or title. But I was rendered still more confused by an old unmarried princess who was also his heir, and who lived at his house. During the whole dinner, at which I sat beside the princess, I supposed that the latter did not speak to me because she hated me for being the prince's heir, and that the prince did not pay any attention to our side of the table, because we—I and the princess—being both his heirs, were equally hateful to him.

' Yes; thou canst not believe how unpleasant it was,' said I on the evening of the same day to Dimitri, prompted by a wish to show him how I hated the idea of being the heir (I thought the feeling a very laudable one)—how unpleasant it was for me to spend fully two hours with the prince. ' He is an excellent man, and was very kind to me,' continued I, wishing by the way to make my friend fully comprehend that I said it not because I had felt humiliated by the prince's treatment of me, but because the idea that people might look down upon me as they did upon the princess, who lives in his house, and truckles to

him in everything, was distasteful to me. He is a splendid old man, extremely kind and gentle to everyone, but it is sad to see how he ill-treats the princess. That hateful money spoils all.

‘Dost thou know, I think it would be much better to speak to the prince frankly,’ said I: ‘to tell him that I esteem him as a man, but do not think of his inheritance, and ask him not to leave me anything, and that it is on that condition alone that I shall continue to visit at his house.’

Dimitri did not burst out laughing when I said this, but, on the contrary, sank into thought, and after a few minutes’ silence, he said to me:

‘Well, I think thou art wrong. Thou must not suppose that people think of thee in the same way as they do of the princess, or if thou dost suppose it, carry thy supposition further; that is to say, thou mayst suppose thou knowest what they think of thee, but their thoughts are so far from thine, that thou despisest them and needest not to pay any attention to them. Thou supposeth that they suppose that thou supposeth . . . but, in short,’ added he, seeing that he had got into a mess, ‘it is much better not to suppose anything at all.’

My friend was quite right; it was only long, long after that I became convinced by personal experience how wrong it is to think, and still worse to speak, of many things which may seem very noble, but which ought to be for ever concealed in the heart of every man, and that noble speeches do not always agree with noble deeds. I feel convinced that a noble purpose once talked about becomes difficult, nay,

almost impossible of fulfilment, for that very reason. Yet how is it possible for a youth, conscious of high and noble impulses, to abstain from talking of them? It is only in after years that the remembrance of them recurs to the mind, filling it with pity, as for a flower that has been heedlessly plucked in the bud, and is found ruthlessly trodden under foot.

On the very next morning after I had talked to my friend Dimitri about the way friendly feeling was often destroyed by money, I found, before leaving town, that I had lavishly spent all my money on pictures and pipes, and borrowed twenty-five roubles of my friend upon his offering to lend me the sum. I did not repay him till long afterwards.

CHAPTER XXII.

AN INTIMATE CONVERSATION WITH MY FRIEND.

THE present conversation took place in the phaeton, while we were on the way to Kunzovo.* Dimitri advised me not to pay his mother a visit in the morning, but came to fetch me after dinner in order to take me to spend the evening, and even to stay over-night, at the country-house where his parents were living. It was only when we had left the town behind us, with its muddy streets, and the unbearably deafening rattling of vehicles along the roads had given place to a view of spacious fields, and the soft creaking of the wheels along the dusty country road,

* Kunzovo, a country seat in the environs of Moscow.

when the fragrant spring air and the open space surrounded me on all sides, that I recovered from the various new impressions, and the feeling of entire freedom which had so perplexed me for the last two days. Dimitri was sociable, and in his meek mood he did not adjust his necktie, did not wink nervously nor close his eyes. I was pleased with the noble feelings which I had expressed, thinking that now he could quite excuse the shameful affair with Kolpikoff, and would cease to despise me for it ; and we began a friendly talk about many intimate matters which are seldom made the topics of general conversation (except amongst friends). Dimitri told me about his family, which I did not yet know—about his mother, his aunt, his sister, and about *one* with whom Volodja and Doubkoff thought him in love, and whom they called ‘the red-haired girl.’ He spoke about his mother with rather cool and solemn praise, as if to put a stop to any argument on the point ; he spoke with ecstasy of his aunt, but at the same time rather condescendingly ; spoke very little about his sister, as if he were ashamed to say anything about her to me ; but about the red-haired lady, whose actual name was Lioubov Sergeievna, and who was an elderly spinster living in Neklioudoff’s house because she was a relation of theirs, he spoke with great animation.

‘Yes, she is a wonderful girl,’ said he, blushing bashfully, but at the same time looking boldly into my face ; ‘she is not young, in fact rather elderly, and not even good-looking ; but then what folly, what nonsense, it is to love beauty ! I cannot understand it ; it is so stupid.’ (He said it as if he had only just

discovered a new and most unusual fact.) ‘But what a soul, what a heart she has, and what principles! . . . I am sure thou wilt never find anybody like that girl in this world.’ (I do not know from whom Dimitri had caught the habit of saying that everything that was good was scarce in this world; he liked the expression, and it suited him somehow.)

‘I am only afraid,’ continued he calmly, having in his argument already entirely demolished all those who were silly enough to love beauty—‘I am afraid thou wilt not understand her, or get to know her soon; she is modest and reserved; she does not like to show her good, her excellent qualities. There is my mother, who, as thou wilt see, is an excellent and clever woman; she has known Lioubov Sergeievna for years, and cannot and will not understand her. Even yesterday I . . . I will tell thee why I was out of sorts when thou askedst me. On the day before yesterday, Lioubov Sergeievna wished me to go with her to visit Ivan Jacovlevitch.* Thou hast probably heard about Ivan Jacovlevitch, who is said to be crack-brained, but is, in fact, a remarkable man. Lioubov Sergeievna, I must tell thee, is extremely pious, and quite understands Ivan Jacovlevitch. She often visits him, talks with him, and gives him money for the poor from her own earnings. She is a wonderful woman, thou wilt see. Well, so I went with her to Ivan Jacovlevitch’s, and feel very much obliged to her for having persuaded me to go and see this remarkable

* A sort of madman, who was supposed to foretell the future fate of those who came to consult him. He died about eighteen years ago.

man. But my mother does not choose to understand it, and considers it all superstition. And yesterday, for the first time in my life, I had a dispute with mother, and we both grew pretty warm about it too,' said he, spasmodically moving his neck, as if at the recollection of the feeling which he had experienced during the dispute.

'Well, and what dost thou intend? that is to say, have you ever thought how all this is to end? . . . Dost thou speak with her of the future, and what your love or friendship are to lead to?' asked I, wishing to dispel his unpleasant recollections.

'You mean, whether I think of marrying her?' said he to me, again blushing, but boldly turning towards me and looking me full in the face.

'Well,' thought I, 'there is no harm in my asking him; we are quite grown-up, we are friends taking a drive together in a phaeton and talking about our future. Anybody would like to overhear us, and look at us.'

'And why not?' continued he; 'my aim is that of every sensible man, to be happy and good, as far as possible; and with her, if she wish it, when I am quite independent, I should be happier and better than I should be with the greatest beauty in the world.'

While conversing thus, we had not noticed that we were already approaching Kunzovo, neither did we notice that the sky had become overcast, and it was beginning to rain. The sun did not stand high above the old trees in the garden of Kunzovo any more—one half of the glittering red circle was covered with a

gray, faintly-transparent cloud, while fiery beams, seeming to be split asunder, emanated from the other half, throwing a wonderfully brilliant light on the old trees, whose green, bushy tops stood motionless against the clear blue sky. The brightness and light of this part of the sky formed a striking contrast to the heavy purple cloud above the grand forest of birch-trees visible on the horizon.

A little to the right, between the bushes and trees, peeped the different-coloured roofs of the country houses ; some of these houses reflected the brilliant sunbeams, some assumed the gloomy character of the other part of the sky. On the left lay a bluish pond, overshadowed by pale-green cytusus, which were dimly reflected on its dull and seemingly convex surface. Beyond the pond, on a rising ground, lay the dark, fallow land, and a straight line of bright green which ran across it disappeared in the distance, lost in the gloomy, leaden horizon. On both sides of the soft road, which the phaeton jolted slowly along, bright-green, rank, sappy rye-fields were visible, the rye here and there breaking into ripe ears. Perfect calmness reigned in the air, and freshness breathed around ; the leaves of the trees and the rye seemed motionless, and unusually clear and bright. It appeared as if every leaf, every blade of grass, had its own complete and happy life. By the roadside I noticed a footpath winding through the dark-green rye, which had already grown about seven inches high, and it somehow reminded me vividly of the country ; and this remembrance in its turn, by some strange complication of thought, re-

minged me vividly of Sonitchka, and of my love for her.

Notwithstanding all my friendship for Dimitri, and the pleasure I experienced in his frankness, I did not feel inclined to know anything more about his feelings and his intentions regarding Lioubov Sergeievna, and I longed to tell him about my love for Sonitchka, which seemed to me to be a much higher kind of love ; but for some reason or other I could not make up my mind to tell him frankly about my hopes, of the happy life I should lead when, having married Sonitchka, I should live in the country, should have little children crawling about on the floor who would call me papa, and how glad I should be when he, with his wife Lioubov Sergeievna, would come to us in their travelling-dresses. . . . Instead of all this, I said, pointing to the setting sun :

‘ Dimitri, just look how beautiful !’

Dimitri said nothing to me, evidently displeased at my answering his confession, which it had probably cost him a great effort to make, by calling his attention to nature, which he, generally speaking, looked at rather indifferently. Nature had a different effect upon him from that which it had upon me ; it did not affect him as much by its beauty as by the interest it excited in him ; he liked it with his mind rather than his heart.

‘ I am very happy,’ continued I, without paying any attention to his being evidently full of his own thoughts, and quite indifferent to what I might say to him. ‘ Dost thou remember my telling thee about a young lady with whom I was in love in my child-

hood? I have seen her to-day,' I went on passionately, 'and now I am quite in love with her. . . .'

And I went on telling him, notwithstanding the expression of indifference which his face wore, about my love and all my plans for our future conjugal happiness. And, strange to say, while I was minutely describing the force of my feelings, I felt that the feeling itself began to decrease.

We were overtaken by a shower as we were turning into the birch-avenue leading to the country house, but we did not get wet. I knew it was raining, only by a few drops having fallen on my nose and on my hand, and by the rain-drops pattering on the sticky young leaves of the birch-trees, which hung their bushy branches, seeming to enjoy those clear, bright drops, their delight expressing itself by the fragrance which pervaded the air all through the avenue. We left the carriage in order to reach the house quicker by running through the garden, but at the very entrance to the house we met four ladies, of whom two had some kind of needlework in their hands, one carried a book, and the other a little dog; they were walking very fast from an opposite direction. Dimitri introduced me to his mother, his sister, his aunt, and to Liubov Sergeievna. They stopped for a second, but the rain coming down faster and faster, the lady whom I took for Dimitri's mother said:

'Let us go to the gallery; there thou wilt introduce him to us once more;' and we all went up the stairs.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE NEKLIUDOFFS.

AT first, amongst the whole company, I was most struck by Lioubov Sergeievna, who, with the lap-dog in her arms, was walking up the stairs last of all in thick knitted shoes, and, stopping twice, looked round at me and then kissed her dog. She was very ugly, red-haired, thin, not tall, a little bent on one side. What made her ugly face still uglier was the peculiar style in which she wore her hair, the parting being on the side (one of the ways of dressing the hair which are adopted by bald-headed women). Despite all my efforts to gratify my friend, I failed to find a single handsome feature in her; even her brown eyes, although expressing kind-heartedness, were too small and dim, and decidedly ugly; even her hands, those characteristic points, although not large and not badly formed, were red and rough.

When, following my friend, I came to the terrace, each of the ladies, before taking up her work again, addressed a few words to me. except Varinka, Dimitri's sister, who looked attentively at me with her large dark-gray eyes, and then began to read aloud from a book which she held on her knees, keeping one finger amidst the leaves.

The Princess Maria Ivanovna was a tall, well-shaped woman of about forty. One might have thought her older, judging by the locks of gray hair protruding from underneath her cap without any effort at con-

cealment. Her fresh, extremely soft face, with hardly a wrinkle, and particularly her lively, cheerful, large bright eyes, made her appear much younger. She had brown eyes, very open; her lips were too thin, a little stern; the nose was fairly regular, and a little turned to the left. She wore no rings on her hand, which was large, almost like a man's hand, with fine oblong fingers. She wore a close-fitting dark-blue dress, which set off her well-shaped figure, which still looked young, and which she evidently liked to show off. She was sitting straight up, and was sewing some article of dress. When I entered the gallery she took my hand, drew me towards her, as if desiring to look at me closer, and said, gazing at me with the same somewhat cold, frank look which characterized her son, that she had known me long, as Dimitri had been telling her about me, and in order to get better acquainted, she invited me to spend the whole day with them. 'Do whatever you please; pray do not let us hinder you in the least, and we shall be as free with you—go for a walk, read, listen, or sleep, if you like it better,' added she.

Sophia Ivanovna was an old maid, a younger sister of the princess, but seeming to be older. She had that extraordinarily full figure which is to be met with only in short and very stout old maids who wear stays. She looked as if all her health had come up with such force that it threatened every minute to choke her. Her short stout arms could not join lower than the curved peak of her dress, nor could she see that same peak of her very tight dress.

Though the Princess Maria Ivanovna was dark, and

had dark eyes, and Sophia Ivanovna was very fair, and had large, bright, and at the same time (a great rarity) calm blue eyes, there was a great family likeness between the two sisters: the same expression, the same nose, the same lips; only Sophia Ivanovna's lips were a little fuller, and her nose turned to the right when she smiled, while the princess's turned to the left. Sophia Ivanovna, as far as could be judged by her dress, and by the way she wore her hair, evidently liked to make herself look young, and wouldn't have exposed her gray locks, if she had any. Her looks and the way she behaved towards me appeared proud at first, and confused me; while with the princess, on the contrary, I felt myself quite at my ease. It was perhaps her stoutness, and her striking resemblance to the portrait of Katherine the Great, which gave her, in my eyes, that grand appearance; but I grew still more confused when, looking fixedly at me, she said to me, 'Our friend's friends are our friends.' I grew calmer, and changed my opinion about her only when, after saying these words, she grew silent and, opening her mouth, took a deep breath. It was probably on account of her stoutness that she had the habit, after saying a few words, of taking a deep breath by opening her mouth a little, and turning up her large blue eyes. This habit, in some way, expressed such pleasing kind-heartedness that, directly after she sighed, I lost all my awe of her, and even felt a great liking for her. Her eyes were charming, her voice sonorous and pleasant; even the full lines of her figure did not seem, to my great youth, to be devoid of beauty.

I expected Lioubov Sergeievna, being my friend's friend, to say something very friendly and intimate to me on the spot; she even looked at me for some time silently, as if hesitating whether what she intended to say to me would not be too friendly, but she broke the silence only by asking me what course I was reading for. Then she looked fixedly at me again for some time, as if hesitating whether she should say an intimate friendly word to me or not. Noticing her hesitation, my face mutely entreated her to speak openly to me, but she only said, 'Nowadays, young men at the university do not study the sciences much;' and then she called her little dog Susette.

During the whole evening Lioubov Sergeievna talked on in the same way, at random; but I believed Dimitri; and he looked so anxiously, first at me, then at her all the evening, as if asking my opinion of her, so that, as is often the case, though feeling perfectly convinced that there was nothing particular in Lioubov Sergeievna, I was extremely far from expressing the thought even to myself.

The last person of the family, Varinka, was a buxom girl of about sixteen. Her large dark-gray eyes, expressing cheerfulness combined with calm attention, were very like her aunt's; her dark hair, hanging down her neck in a long tress, and her extremely soft and pretty hands, were her chief beauties.

'I am afraid you will find it dull, Mr. Nicolas, to hear the middle of the story without knowing the beginning,' said Sophia Ivanovna, with her kind-hearted sigh, turning over some pieces of the dress she was sewing.

The reading had stopped at the time, for Dimitri had gone out of the room.

‘But you have perhaps already read “Rob Roy”?’

Ever since I had begun to wear a student’s uniform I considered it my duty, whenever I was in the company of people with whom I was not very closely acquainted, to try and give some clever and original answer to the simplest question, and I thought it a great shame to give short and plain answers, as, for instance, ‘Yes,’ ‘No,’ ‘Dull,’ ‘Pleasant,’ and so on. Throwing a glance at my fashionable trousers and the shining buttons of my coat, I said that I had not read ‘Rob Roy,’ but that I was much interested in listening, for I liked better to read books from the middle than from the beginning.

‘It is twice as interesting. You have to guess what has gone on before and what is going to happen,’ added I, with a self-conceited smile.

The princess laughed—a forced laugh, as it seemed to me. (I afterwards noticed that she always laughed thus.)

‘Very likely,’ said she. ‘Will you stay here long, Nicolas? You are not offended at my calling you by your name without adding “Mr.”? When are you going?’

‘I do not know. Perhaps to-morrow; perhaps we shall stay some time longer,’ said I, though we were to start for certain the next day.

‘I should like you to stay on your own account, and on that of my Dimitri,’ said the princess, with a far-away look in her eyes. ‘In our days friendship is a fine thing.’

I felt that all were looking at me and expecting to hear what I should say, though Varinka pretended to be looking at the work of her aunt. I felt as if I were to a certain degree undergoing an examination, and that I had to show myself to the best advantage.

'Yes,' said I; 'the friendship of Dimitri is of use to me, but I am unable to be of any service to him. He is a thousand times better than I am. (Dimitri could not hear what I was saying, otherwise I should have been afraid that he would perceive the insincerity of my words.)

The princess again began to laugh an unnatural laugh—natural to her, however.

'There, and according to him,' said she, 'c'est vous qui êtes un petit monstre de perfection.'

'Monstre de perfection—an excellent expression—I must remember it,' thought I.

'But, altogether, he is a clever man in this respect,' continued she, lowering her voice (which was particularly pleasant to me), and nodding her head in the direction of Lioubov Sergeievna; 'he has discovered in poor auntie' (as they used to call Lioubov Sergeievna), 'whom I have known for twenty years, with her Susette, accomplishments which I never suspected. . . . Varja, order a glass of water to be brought to me,' added she, again with the same far-away look in her eyes, probably considering it too soon to acquaint me with their family affairs; 'or, rather, let him go. He has nothing to do, and you can go on with your reading. Go, my friend, straight to the door, and call out, "Peter, let Maria Ivanovna have a glass of water with some ice in it,"'

said she to me, and again laughed her unnatural laugh.

‘I suppose she wants to talk about me,’ thought I, on leaving the room. ‘I suppose she wants to say that she has observed that I am a very, very clever young man.’ I had not had time to go many steps from the door when the stout Sophia Ivanovna, huffing and puffing, overtook me.

‘*Merci, mon cher!*’ said she. ‘I have to go there, so I shall tell the man.’

CHAPTER XXIV.

LOVE.

AS I afterwards grew to know Sophia Ivanovna, I found she was one of those rare elderly women who are born for family life, but whom fate has deprived of that happiness, and who, in consequence of this deprivation, resolve to pour out on some chosen persons all that amount of love which had long been growing stronger and stronger in their hearts for children and a husband. And that amount of love in these old maids is usually so inexhaustible, that in spite of there being a great number of chosen friends, there still remains plenty of love, which they breathe on everyone surrounding them; on all, both good and bad, whoever they may happen to come across in their lives.

There are three kinds of love :

1. Love of beauty,
2. Self-denying love, and
3. Active love.

I am not speaking about the love of a young man for a young girl, or *vice versâ* ; I feel afraid of such tender feelings, and I have been unfortunate enough in my life never to have seen a single spark of truth in that kind of love, nothing but falsehood, in which the senses, conjugal ties, money, the desire to bind or unbind one's self, had so complicated the feeling itself that there was no making anything out of it. I speak about the love for humanity ; about love which is either concentrated on one or on many, according to the greater or lesser power of the heart ; about love for our mother, father, brother, children, friends, comrades, companions, countrymen ; about love for our fellow-creatures.

Love of beauty is love for the sake of the feelings excited by it alone. People who love thus, find in the beloved object pleasure only to the extent to which the latter excites that pleasant consciousness, the expression of which they enjoy. People who love thus, trouble themselves very little about their love being returned, which is a matter that has no influence whatever over the beauty and the charm of the feeling. They often change the objects of their love, as their principal aim is simply that the pleasant sensation of love should be constantly excited. In order to keep up this pleasant feeling, they always talk about their love in the most exquisite language to their beloved object, as well as to all, even to those who have nothing at all to do with it. In our country there are people of a certain class who love beauty, and not only tell everybody about their love, but are sure to speak of it in French. It is ridiculous and

strange to say so, but I am convinced that there were formerly, and still are at present, many people belonging to a certain class of society, especially ladies, whose love of their friends, husbands, children, would instantly be crushed if they were not permitted to speak about it in French.

The second kind of love—self-denying love—is love of the process of self-sacrifice for the beloved object, without considering whether the sacrifices do any good or harm to the latter. There is nothing, however disagreeable it may be, that I should not be ready to do to myself for the purpose of assuring the whole world, and him or her, of my devotion. This is a formula of this kind of love. People who love thus do not believe in love being returned (for it is a still greater merit to sacrifice one's self for a person who does not understand one); they are sickly, which also increases the merit of their sacrifices; they are for the most part constant, for it would be hard for them to lose the merit of the sacrifices they have made for the beloved object; they are always ready to die for the purpose of proving their devotion to him or her, but, at the same time, they despise the little daily proofs of love which do not require any particular amount of self-denial. It is all the same to them whether you eat well or sleep well, whether you enjoy yourself, whether you are well, and they will never do anything to provide for your comfort if it be in their power to do so; but they are always ready to face a bullet, to throw themselves into the water, the fire, to consume away with love, if an opportunity arise. Besides, people inclined to self-denying love, as a rule, are

proud of their love ; they are jealous, suspicious, and, strange to say, they wish the objects of their affection to be in danger, in order to be able to save them and relieve them, or to be wicked even, in order that they may amend them.

You live alone in the country with your wife, who loves you with self-denying love. You enjoy good health, you are comfortable, you have occupations you love, your loving wife is so weak that she is unable to do the house-work, which rests with the servants, or to occupy herself with the children, who are in the hands of nurses, or even to care for any kind of work, because she does not love anything but you. She is *evidently* unwell, but, for fear of grieving you, she says nothing about it ; she is *evidently* weary, but she does not mind being weary all her life for your sake. Your giving yourself up so zealously to your work (whatever it may be—hunting, books, husbandry, service) is *evidently* killing her ; she sees that those occupations will ruin you, but she is silent and suffers. But now you fall ill : your loving wife forgets her illness, and sits at your bedside without moving from the spot, in spite of your entreaties not to harass herself to no purpose ; and every second you feel her pitying look resting upon you, as if the look said, ‘ All the same, I shall never leave you.’ The next morning you feel a little better—you walk into the next room. The room has not been heated nor set in order ; soup, the only food you can take, has not been ordered in the kitchen ; the medicine has not been sent for ; but your loving wife, worn out from her night’s watch, stills keeps looking at you with the same expression

of pity, walks on tiptoe, and in a whisper gives confused orders to servants. You want to read ; your loving wife says, with a sigh, that she knows you will not listen to her, you will be angry with her, but she is already used to it—it is better for you not to read ; you want to walk about the room—you had better not do that either ; you want to talk to some friend who calls upon you—you had better not talk. In the night you are again feverish, you wish to doze, but your loving wife, thin, wan, and sighing every now and then, sits in the pale light of the night-lamp, opposite you, in an armchair, and her slightest movement, the slightest sound that escapes her lips, excites a feeling of vexation and impatience in you. You have a servant who has been in your service for the last twenty years ; you are accustomed to him ; he attends to you with pleasure, and does it well, because he has rested during the day, and gets paid for his service ; but she will not let him attend to you. She does everything herself, with her weak, unaccustomed fingers, whose motions you cannot help following with reserved animosity when they vainly try to open the flask, put the light out, spill the medicine, or touch you. If you happen to be an impatient, violent man, you ask her to leave your room, and your excited, sickly ear hears her humbly sighing, weeping, and whispering some silly remark to your servant outside the door. At last, if you do not die, your loving wife, who has not slept for twenty nights during your illness (this she repeats to you incessantly), falls ill, pines away, suffers, and becomes still more unfit for anything, and by the time you are quite well again,

she expresses her self-denying love only by a meek weariness, which involuntarily passes over to you and to all around you.

The third kind of love—active love—is an aspiration to satisfy every want, every wish, every caprice, even every fault of the beloved object. People who love thus love for their whole lives, because the more they love, the better they learn to know their beloved, and the easier it becomes for them to love—that is, to satisfy all the wishes of him or her they love. Their attachment is rarely expressed in words, and never either self-sufficiently or eloquently, but always modestly awkwardly, because they are always afraid that they do not love enough. Such people even love the faults of their beloved, because those faults give them a chance of satisfying every new fancy. They long for mutual love—even willingly deceive themselves, believing in their love being returned, and are happy ; but they can go on loving all the same, even if their feelings are not reciprocated, and not only wish their beloved to be happy, but by all the moral and material means, whether great or small, which are in their power, they constantly try to make those they love happy.

And thus this active love of Sophia Ivanovna to her nephew, her niece, her sister, to Lioubov Sergeievna, and even to myself, because I was loved by Dimitri, might be seen in her eyes, in her every word and motion.

It was only a considerable time afterwards that I learnt fully to appreciate Sophia Ivanovna ; but even then the question struck me how it was that Dimitri,

who endeavoured to understand love very differently to what young people generally do, and who had always had before his eyes that dear, loving Sophia Ivanovna, had suddenly fallen passionately in love with that enigmatical personage, Lioubov Sergeievna, and only admitted that his aunt had many good qualities too. It justifies the saying, 'No man is a prophet in his own country.' It must have been either because there are in every man more bad qualities than good ones, or because a man is more impressed by bad qualities than by good ones. He had only known Lioubov Sergeievna for a short time, while his aunt's love had never failed him since his birth.

CHAPTER XXV.

I BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED WITH THE FAMILY.

WHEN I returned to the gallery they were not talking about me at all, as I had expected; but Varinka had left off reading, and having put the book aside, she was earnestly discussing something with Dimitri, who was walking up and down the room, adjusting his necktie and half closing his eyes. The discussion seemed to be about Ivan Jacovlevitch and superstition in general; but it was so eager that it evidently had a bearing upon the family. The princess and Lioubov Sergeievna sat silent, attentively listening to every word, evidently wishing from time to time to take part in the discussion, but refraining from doing so, and leaving it to the others to speak for them—one to

Varinka, the other to Dimitri. When I entered, Varinka looked at me with an expression of indifference which showed how deeply she was carried away by the dispute, and that it was a matter of indifference to her whether I heard what she said or not. The princess's face wore the same expression; she evidently took part with Varinka in the discussion. But Dimitri went on talking still more eagerly in my presence, while Lioubov Sergeievna, as if very much startled at my coming, said, without addressing herself to anyone in particular, 'The old adage is very true: "Si jeunesse savait, si vieillesse pouvait, rien ne se perdrait."'

But this sentence did not break off the discussion, but only made me think that Lioubov Sergeievna and my friend were in the wrong. Although I felt it rather awkward to be present at this little family quarrel, it was pleasant to see the relations of the family to each other, which showed themselves during the dispute in their true light, and to feel that my presence did not prevent them from speaking out.

How often do you see a family for years under the same false veil, keeping within the rules of decorum, and the true terms on which the members stand are unknown to you! (I have noticed that the more impermeable, and therefore more slightly the veil is, the more serious are the real terms concealed from you.) Sometimes it happens, quite unexpectedly, that in this family circle some question is raised which at first seems quite insignificant, as, for instance, about some blond-lace, or about a visit, or about the husband's horses, and without any obvious cause the

discussion get warmer and warmer ; the veil does not leave room enough for the contentious argument, and suddenly, to the horror of the disputants themselves, and to the astonishment of the bystanders, all the true terms on which the family stand towards each other are disclosed, the veil is raised, only waving lightly about between the belligerent parties, reminding you how long you have been deceived. Very often it is less painful to knock one's head with all one's might against the lintel of a door than lightly to touch a sore spot like this. And such a sore spot is to be found in almost every family. In the family of Neklioudoff's the sore spot was the strange love of Dimitri for Lioubov Sergeievna, which excited in his sister and mother a feeling not exactly of envy, but of wounded family feeling. This is why the dispute about Ivan Jacovlevitch and superstition was for all of them a subject of such grave importance.

'Thou always triest to see something extraordinary in what others laugh at, and everybody despises,' said Varinka, with her sonorous voice and distinct enunciation ; 'precisely in such things dost thou try to find something unusually good.'

'In the first place, only a silly person can talk about despising a remarkable man like Ivan Jacovlevitch,' replied Dimitri, convulsively turning his head away from his sister ; 'and in the second, thou, on the contrary, purposely triest never to see the good that is before thee.'

On re-entering the room, Sophia Ivanovna cast a frightened glance, first at her nephew, then at her niece, then at me, and twice, as if she were saying

something mentally, opened her mouth and uttered a deep sigh.

‘Varja, please go on reading,’ said she, handing her the book, and tapping her hand gently; ‘I am extremely anxious to know whether he found her again.’ (I think that in the novel there was nothing about anybody’s being lost.) ‘And you, Mitja, had better put a bandage round your cheek, my boy, for it is cool, and your teeth will begin to ache again,’ said she to her nephew, in spite of the angry look which he threw her, probably because she had interrupted the logical course of his argument.

The reading went on.

This little dispute did not in the least disturb the family peace and concord which reigned in that female circle.

The family circle, which was evidently directed and led by the Princess Maria Ivanovna, was peculiarly attractive in my eyes, on account of the good sense, combined with frankness and elegance, which pervaded it. I could see this characteristic in the good taste, cleanliness, and durability of all the things in the room—the bell, the binding of the books, the arm-chairs, tables; in the straight, tightly-laced figure of the princess, the unconcealed gray hair, and in her calling me, upon my first visit, simply Nicolas; in their occupations, in the way of reading, in the way they were sewing, and in the extraordinary whiteness of the ladies’ hands. (They all possessed one general family feature—in their hands—the soft part of the palm of the hand being pink, and distinctly separated by a straight line from the extraor-

dinary whiteness of the upper part of the hand.) But this character showed itself most of all in the way they all three spoke Russian and French, distinctly pronouncing every letter, finishing every word and sentence with pedantic exactness. I was, as yet, so little used to being treated without any ceremony, and, at the same time, like a grown-up man, as they treated me, telling me their opinions and listening to mine—for, in spite of shining buttons and the blue cuffs of my student's coat, I always expected and feared to hear people say to me, 'Do you really think that we are talking seriously to you? Go along, and study your lessons.' But amidst their circle I did not feel the least bashful. I got up and changed my seat, and boldly spoke with everyone except Varinka, whom I did not think it proper, for some reason or other, or right, to speak to, as I saw her for the first time.

During the reading, while listening to her pleasant sonorous voice, I looked at her, then at the sandy path in the flower-garden, on which there appeared round dark patches from the rain, at the lime-trees, on the leaves of which the little drops of rain kept splashing down from the pale, transparent, bluish cloud, then at the last purple beams of the setting sun, which illuminated the bushy old birches, all wet with rain, and then again at Varinka. I thought she was not at all as ugly as she had at first seemed to me to be. 'It is a pity that I am already in love,' thought I, 'and that Varinka is not Sonitchka. How nice it would be to become a member of the family! I should thus find a mother, an aunt, and a wife all at

once!' While I was thinking thus, I looked fixedly at Varinka, who was still reading, and thought that I was magnetizing her, and that she was bound to look at me. Varinka raised her head from the book, looked at me, and, meeting my eyes, turned away.

'However, the rain doesn't cease,' said she.

And suddenly a strange feeling came over me; I remembered that what occurred to me now was an exact repetition of what had occurred to me once before; that then, too, exactly as at present, it was raining slightly, and the sun was setting behind the birch-trees, when I looked at *her*, while she read, and I magnetized her, and she looked up, and that I had even remembered that this had occurred to me once before.

'Is it possible that she is *she*?' thought I. 'Is it possible that *it* is beginning?' But I soon decided that she was not *she*, and that *it* was not beginning yet. 'First of all, she is not pretty,' thought I; 'besides, she is simply a young lady, and I made her acquaintance in the most usual way, while the other is to be something extraordinary—I shall meet her in some extraordinary place. And, then, the only reason why I like this family so much is because I have not seen anybody else yet,' reasoned I; 'and there are probably many such families, and I shall meet many of them in my life.'

CHAPTER XXVI.

I SHOW MYSELF TO THE BEST ADVANTAGE.

WHEN tea was served, the reading was interrupted, and the ladies began a conversation about persons and circumstances unknown to me, and, as it seemed to me, that, notwithstanding the friendly reception they had given me, it was only done in order to make me feel the difference there was in our ages and positions. But in the general conversation which ensued, and in which I could take part and thus make up for my former silence, I tried to show my extraordinary cleverness and originality of mind, considering myself bound to do so on account of my uniform. When the conversation turned upon country houses, I told them that Prince Ivan Ivanovitch possessed so fine a country-house that people came from London and Paris to look at it ; that there was a railing which had cost 380,000 roubles;* and that Prince Ivan Ivanovitch was a near relation of mine ; that I had dined that day at his house, and that he had invited me to come and spend the summer with him at his country-seat, but that I had refused, because I knew the house well, having been there several times, and that all those fences and bridges did not interest me in the least, for I could not endure pomp, especially in the country ; that I, indeed, liked the country to be quite the country.

After having told this awfully complicated lie, I

* About £40,000.

got confused, and blushed, so that all most likely noticed that I was telling a lie. Varinka, who just then handed me a cup of tea, and Sophia Ivanovna, who looked at me at the time, turned away from me, and started another topic, with an expression on their faces which I afterwards often saw on the faces of kind people, when any very young man would begin to say what was evidently untrue, an expression which seems to say, 'We know that all this is untrue—why does he tell such stories, poor fellow!' . . .

The reason why I told them about Prince Ivan Ivanovitch possessing a country-house was that I could not find any better pretext to tell them about my being a relation of Prince Ivan Ivanovitch, and that I had that day been dining at his house; but why I told them about the fence which cost 380,000 roubles, and about my having so often been at his country-house, when I had never been there at all—could never have been at Prince Ivan Ivanovitch's, for he was always either in Moscow or Naples, and this the Neklioudoffs knew very well—why I said this I really cannot even now account for. Neither in my childhood, my boyhood, nor afterwards, in my more mature age, have I ever noticed myself to be addicted to falsehood; on the contrary, I have always been rather too frank and open-hearted; but in this first period of youth the desire often arose in me to tell the most desperate lies without any obvious reason. I purposely use the expression 'desperate lies,' for I told them in matters in which I could very easily be detected. It seems to me that an ostentatious wish to show myself other than I really was, combined

with the unfeasible hope of telling lies without being detected, was the principal cause of that strange taste.

After tea, as the rain had ceased and the weather in the evening twilight was calm and clear, the princess proposed to us to go out for a walk to the back-garden, in order to show us her favourite spot. According to my rule always to do something out of the usual way, and considering such clever people as the princess and myself bound always to stand above the trivial rules of good breeding, I replied, 'That I could not bear to go out for a walk without some definite purpose in view, and that if I did care to take a walk it was—quite alone.' I did not at all consider that what I was saying was simply rude; but it seemed to me, at that period of my life, that there was nothing more shameful than to pay commonplace compliments; that there was nothing more pleasing and original than frankness, even if it were rude. However, feeling very well satisfied with my reply, I nevertheless went for a walk with the whole party.

The princess's favourite spot was quite at the foot of the garden, in the very thickest part of it, on a small bridge thrown over a narrow marsh. The view was very limited, but melancholy and graceful. We have become so used to see no difference between art and nature that very often those very phenomena in nature which we never meet with in pictures seem unnatural to us; and *vice versâ*, those which are often repeated in pictures seem commonplace to us, while others again, too full of one idea and one feeling, which we meet with in nature, seem to us too

elaborately refined. The princess's favourite spot was in this style. It consisted of a small pond, its banks overgrown with grass ; behind it rose a steep hill covered with gigantic old trees and bushes, whose varied foliage all mingled into one entangled mass ; at the foot of the hill was an old birch-tree, which lay across the pond, its thick roots clinging to the damp bank of the pond, its summit leaning against a tall, slender aspen tree, and its bushy branches overhanging the smooth surface of the pond, in which these hanging branches and the surrounding foliage were reflected.

‘How lovely!’ said the princess, shaking her head and addressing herself to no one in particular.

‘Yes, beautiful ; but it seems to me to be too like a stage-effect,’ said I, wishing to show that I had my own opinion on all subjects.

As if she had not heard my remark, the princess kept on admiring the landscape, and, addressing herself to her sister and Lioubov Sergeievna, pointed out some details to them—the curved branches overhanging the pond and reflected in the water, which she found particularly pretty. Sophia Ivanovna said that it was most lovely, and that her sister used to pass hours here ; but it was evident she only said it in order to please the princess. I have noticed that people endowed with a loving disposition are seldom greatly impressed by the charms of nature. Lioubov Sergeievna was also in raptures, and asked, by the way, ‘How the birch-tree stood thus ? How long it would stand thus ?’ and looked continually at her lap-dog Susette, which ran up and down the bridge, with

her bandy legs, wagging her woolly tail, and looking as delighted as if she were out-of-doors for the first time. Dimitri began a very logical argument with his mother to prove that there could by no means be a fine view when the horizon was limited. Varinka did not say anything. When I looked at her she was leaning upon the railing and gazing straight before her, so that I saw only her profile. She was evidently deep in thought and even moved by something, and was obviously not thinking of herself; nor did she notice that I was looking at her. The expression of her large eyes showed such fixed attention and such calm bright thought; her pose was so natural, and, notwithstanding her short stature, even stately, that I was again struck with the idea that I had seen her before, and again asked myself, 'Is *it* not beginning?' And again I answered myself, 'That I was already in love with Sonitchka, and that Varinka was simply a young lady, my friend's sister.' But I felt a liking for her at that moment, and therefore felt an inexplicable longing to say something slightly unpleasant to her.

'Do you know, Dimitri,' said I to my friend, stepping nearer to Varinka, so as to enable her to hear what I was saying, 'I find that even if there were no gnats here there would be nothing particular about it; but as it is,' added I, slapping myself on my forehead and really crushing a gnat, 'it is an ugly place.'

'It seems you are not an admirer of the beauties of nature,' said Varinka to me, without turning her head.

‘I find it an idle, useless occupation,’ replied I, greatly pleased to have said something rather unpleasant and original at the same time to her.

Varinka slightly raised her eyebrows for an instant, with an expression of pity, and then went on, looking calmly forwards.

I began to feel vexed with her, but, nevertheless, the gray, faded railing of the bridge upon which she was leaning, the reflection in the dark pond of the overhanging branches of the old birch-tree, which seemed to wish to unite its branches with those that overhung it, the marshy smell, the consciousness of having a crushed gnat on my forehead, and her pensive look and stately pose, often unexpectedly recurred to my fancy in after-times.

CHAPTER XXVII.

DIMITRI.

WHEN we returned home from our walk, Varinka declined to sing, as she usually did in the evening, and I was presumptuous enough to suppose it was on account of what I had said to her on the bridge. The Neklioudoffs never had supper, and went to bed early, but that day Dimitri, as Sophia Ivanovna had predicted, had a toothache, so we went up to his room earlier than usual. Thinking that I had fulfilled everything that my blue collar and silver buttons required, and that I had pleased everybody, I was in a most pleasant, self-sufficient state of mind, while

Dimitri, on the contrary, on account of his dispute and the toothache, was silent and gloomy. He seated himself at the table, got out his writing—a diary and a writing-book, in which he used every evening to enter his past and future studies—and, incessantly frowning and rubbing his cheek with his hand, sat writing for some time.

‘Oh, leave me alone!’ shouted he to the servant-maid, who was sent by Sophia Ivanovna to inquire how his toothache was, and whether he would like to have a poultice made. After this, saying that a bed would be made for me directly, and he would be back immediately, he went to Liubov Sergeievna.

‘What a pity that Varinka is not pretty, and is not Sonitchka!’ thought I, when I was left alone in the room. ‘How nice it would be, after finishing my studies at the university, to return to them and to ask for her hand! I should say, “Princess, I am no longer young—I cannot love passionately, but shall always love you as a dear sister. I have the greatest respect for you,” I should say to the mother, “and for you too, Sophia Ivanovna, believe me. So tell me plainly and straightforwardly,” I will add, addressing Varinka, “will you be my wife?” Yes; and she will give me her hand, I shall press it slightly in mine, and say: “I love not in words, but in deed.”’ And then it suddenly flashed across my mind, ‘What if Dimitri were to fall in love with Lubotchka and want to marry her?—I know Lubotchka is in love with him. But in that case one of us could not marry*—

* In Russia a marriage between a brother-in-law and sister-in-law is forbidden by the Church.

and that would be famous! Then I should act thus: I should notice it immediately, should go to Dimitri, and should say to him, 'My friend, why should we try to conceal our feelings from each other? You know that my love for your sister will only cease with my life; but I know all. You have crushed my hopes—you have made me miserable—but do you know how Nicolas Irtenjeff avenges the misery entailed upon him for his whole life? Take my sister'—and I should put Lubotchka's hand in his. He would say, 'No, for nothing in the world!' But I should say in reply, 'Prince Neklioudoff, it is in vain that you endeavour to outdo Nicolas Irtenjeff in magnanimity. There is no man in the world more magnanimous than he is. I should then make my bow and leave the room. Dimitri and Lubotchka would follow me with tears in their eyes, and entreat me to accept their sacrifice; and then I would perhaps accept it, and be very happy, supposing only that I were in love with Varinka.

These dreams were so pleasant that I felt desirous to communicate them to my friend, but, notwithstanding our promises of mutual frankness, I somehow felt that there was no physical possibility of telling him about them.

Dimitri returned from Lioubov Sergeievna with some drops which she had given him to apply to his tooth. The pain still grew worse, and he was therefore still more gloomy. My bed was not made yet, and Dimitri's attendant—a young boy—came to ask him where I was to sleep.

'Go to the devil!' shouted Dimitri, stamping his

foot. 'Vasjka! Vasjka! Vasjka!' shouted he, when the boy had gone; 'Vasjka! make up my bed on the floor.'

'No; I had rather sleep on the floor,' said I.

'Well, never mind, make it up anywhere,' continued Dimitri in the same angry tone. 'Vasjka! why art thou not making the bed?'

But Vasjka evidently did not know what he was to do, and stood motionless.

'Now then, what is it? Make the bed, make the bed! Vasjka! Vasjka!' shouted Dimitri, suddenly getting into a rage.

But still Vasjka did not know what to do, and stood motionless as before, and looked quite bewildered.

'So you have sworn to rui—— to drive me mad?'

And Dimitri, suddenly rising from his seat and running up to the boy, struck Vasjka's head with his fist several times as hard as he could, and the boy ran headlong out of the room.

At the door Dimitri stopped, looked round at me, and the expression of rage and harshness which for a second had appeared on his face, was followed by such a meek, shamed, and loving, childlike expression, that I felt full of pity for him, and, much as I wished to turn away, I could not make up my mind to do so. He did not say anything to me, but kept walking up and down the room for a long time, now and then looking at me, with the same apologizing expression; then he got his diary out of the table-drawer, made some entry in it, took off his coat, folded it carefully up, approached the corner where the image of a saint

was hanging, folded his large white hands over his breast, and began to say his prayers. He prayed so long that Vasjka had time to bring in the bed and lay it out on the floor, as I told him to do in a whisper.

I undressed and lay down on the bed on the floor ; Dimitri still went on praying. Looking at Dimitri's somewhat round-shouldered back, and the soles of his feet, which exhibited themselves to me in a somewhat submissive manner when he prostrated himself before the image, I felt as if I loved him more than before, and the thoughts kept recurring to my mind, ' Shall I tell him or not about my day-dreams concerning our sisters ? When he had finished his prayer, Dimitri lay down on my bed, and leaning his head upon his elbow, looked at me for a long time in silence, with a meek and shamed look. It was evidently a trial to him, but he forced himself to do so as a punishment. I smiled as I looked up at him ; he smiled too.

' Why dost thou not tell me,' said he, ' that I have acted badly ? Do not you think so ?'

' Yes,' replied I, ' although I was thinking of something quite different ; but it seemed to me that I had really been thinking about it. Well, it was very wrong of thee ; I did not expect it of thee,' said I, finding at this moment particular pleasure in addressing him as *thou*. ' And how are thy teeth ?' added I.

' They do not ache any more. Oh, Nicolinka, my friend,' resumed Dimitri in a gentle tone, and his bright eyes seemed to be full of tears ; ' I know—I feel, how wicked I have been, and God sees how I long to be better and pray for help ; but what am I to

do, with my unfortunate, horrid disposition? What am I to do? I try to check myself, to amend my faults, but it is impossible to do so at once, and impossible to do it by myself. It requires somebody to support, to assist me. There is Liubov Sergeievna—she understands me, and has helped me much. I know by my diary that in the course of a year I have already become much better. Oh, Nicolinka, love!’ continued he, with extraordinary, unusual gentleness, and already in a calmer tone after his confession, ‘how great is the influence of a woman such as she is! My God, what a blessing it will be when I am free to act as I please, to have such a friend! With her I am quite a different being.’

And thereupon Dimitri began to develop his plans of marriage, of a life in the country, and his continual efforts for improvement.

‘I shall live in the country; thou wilt come to my place; it may be by that time thou wilt be married to Sonitchka,’ said he. ‘Our children will play together. It does seem ridiculous and absurd; but is it not a thing that may happen some day?’

‘I should think so! And very easily,’ said I, smiling, and at the same time thinking that it would be better still if I married his sister.

‘Dost thou know,’ said he to me after a few moments’ silence, ‘I suspect thou only fanciest that thou art in love with Sonitchka. As far as I can judge it is all nonsense, and thou dost not yet know what the real feeling is.’

I did not say a word, because I almost agreed with him. We were both silent for some time.

‘Of course thou hast noticed that I was in a nasty temper again to-day, and I was not even gentlemanly in my dispute with Varia. I afterwards felt extremely sorry myself, especially as it took place in your presence. Although she has many false notions about things and what really ought to be, she is a splendid girl; a very good girl, as thou wilt see as soon as thou gettest to know her better.’

His passing in his speech from the topic of my not being in love with Sonitchka, to praises of his sister, gave me great pleasure and made me blush; but I did not say anything to him about his sister, and our conversation turned upon other matters.

So we passed the time in chatting till sunrise, and the faint dawn of day had burst in through the window before Dimitri went to his bed and put the light out.

‘Well, now to sleep,’ said he.

‘Yes,’ was my answer—only one word.

‘Well!’

‘How pleasant life is!’ said I.

‘Yes, it is,’ replied he in a voice which made me fancy that I saw in the dark the expression of his happy, loving eyes and childlike smile.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN THE COUNTRY.

THE next day Volodja and myself went in a stage-coach to the country. On the way, thinking over my various recollections of Moscow, I remembered

Sonitchka Valahin ; but that was only in the evening, after we had left five stages behind us. 'It is strange that, being in love, I have forgotten all about it ; I must think of her,' said I to myself. And I began to think of her as well as one can think while travelling, that is without any consciousness, though vividly ; and my thoughts carried me so far away that when I arrived at our country-seat I considered it for some reason or other necessary during two days to be gloomy and thoughtful before everybody, and especially before Katenka, whom I considered a competent judge in such matters, and to whom I had given a few hints about the state of my heart. But notwithstanding all my efforts to deceive both myself and others into the belief that I was love-sick, notwithstanding my having purposely appropriated all the characteristic signs of love which I had noticed in others, I only remembered that I was in love for two days, and not always even during that time, but mostly in the evenings, and at last, as soon as I had got into our new routine of country life and occupations, I quite forgot all about my love for Sonitchka.

We came to Petrovskoje at night, and I was so sound asleep that I did not see the house, nor the birch-tree avenue, nor any of the family, for they had all gone to their respective rooms for the night and were fast asleep already. Hunch-backed Foka, bare-foot, and wrapped up in a wadded jacket of his wife's, came with a candle in his hand to unbolt the door. When he saw us he quite trembled with joy, kissed our shoulders, hastily took away the mat on which he usually slept, and dressed himself. As I went up the

staircase I was still half asleep, but in the entrance-hall the lock of the door, the bolt, the irregular floor, the chest, the old candlestick, besmeared with tallow, just as it had been before ; the shadows thrown by the irregular flicker of the tallow-candle, which just lighted the double window, dusty from never having been taken out, and behind which, as I recollected, there grew a sorb-tree—were all so familiar to me, so full of recollections, so thoroughly linked together, as if united by one thought, that I felt as if the dear old home lovingly welcomed me back. The question involuntarily arose in my mind : ‘ How could I and my home have been parted from each other so long ? ’ And I hastily ran to see whether the other rooms had remained the same as they had been. Everything was the same, only everything had become smaller, in width and height, and I seemed to have grown taller, heavier and stouter ; but even such as I was, the house received me joyously into its embrace, and every window, every step of the stairs, every sound, recalled to my mind the faces, feelings, and events of the irrevocable, happy past. We entered our nursery bedroom : all the old childish terrors again lurked in the dark corners and behind the doors ; we passed through the drawing-room—the same gentle, tender motherly love breathed over everything in the room ; we crossed the hall—noisy, careless, childish joy seemed to have come to a standstill there, waiting to be once more brought to life. In the parlour into which we were taken by Foka, and where he had made our beds, everything—the mirror, the screens, the old image of a saint framed

in wood, every irregularity of the white-papered wall—spoke to us of suffering, of death, and of her who would never return to us.

We went to bed, and Foka left us, wishing us good-night.

‘This is the room where mamma died, is it not?’ said Volodja.

I did not give him any answer, and pretended to be asleep. Had I endeavoured to say a word, I should have burst into tears. When I awoke the next morning, papa, still undressed, in Torjock* boots and a morning-gown, sat, with a cigar in his mouth, on Volodja’s bed, talking and laughing. With a joyous twitching of the lips he left Volodja, came up to me, and slapping my back with his large hand, put his cheek to my lips and pressed it against them.

‘Well, that is splendid ; thank you, diplomatist,’ said he, in his peculiar half-joking, half-caressing way, looking at me with his little sparkling eyes. ‘Volodja says thou hast passed famously. Well done ! If thou dost not get any nonsense into thy head, thou wilt be a splendid fellow too. Thank thee, my boy. Now we shall live here splendidly, and for the winter shall perhaps go to St. Petersburg. It is a pity that the hunting season is over ; otherwise I should have given thee a treat. Well, art thou a pretty good sportsman, Voldemar ? There is abundance of game here ; I shouldn’t mind going with you myself one of these days. And in the winter, so God will, we shall

* Torjock, a town in Russia famous for its manufactories of soft boots.

remove to St. Petersburg. You will get into society, form good connections. You are no longer children. I was just now telling Volodja that now your paths in life lie before you, and my duty is done. You can go on alone; but whenever you like to ask my advice, do so. I am not your tutor, but your friend; at least, I will be your friend and companion and adviser wherever I can, and that's all. How does thy philosophy agree with this plan? Eh, Coco? Is it good or bad, eh?

Of course I said it was splendid, and I really thought so. Papa's face had a peculiarly attractive, cheerful, and happy expression that day; and the new relations between him and myself, as if we were equals or comrades, made me love him still more.

'Now, tell me, didst thou call upon all our friends? hast thou been to Ivin's? Didst thou see old Ivin? What^d did he say to thee?' he went on. 'Hast thou been to see Prince Ivan Ivanovitch?'

We were such a long time talking without dressing ourselves, that the sun had already receded from the windows^d of the drawing-room, and Jacoff (as old as ever, twisting his fingers behind his back just as he used to do, and repeating in his funny way, 'And then again') entered our room and announced that the small carriage was ready.

'Where art^d thou going?' asked I.

'Alas! I had almost forgotten,' said papa, accompanying his words with a vexed twitching of the face, and coughing; 'I promised to call upon the Epifanoffs to-day. Do you remember Mrs. Epifanoff—la belle Flamande? She used to visit your mamma. They

are nice people.' And, shrugging his shoulders, papa left the room reluctantly, as it seemed to me.

Lubotchka had already come up to the door several times during our chat, asking, 'May I come in?' and every time papa had called out through the door that it was quite impossible, as we were undressed.

'What does it matter? Haven't I seen you before in your dressing-gowns?'

'You cannot see your brothers without their inexpressibles!' cried he; 'but there, each of them will tap the door. Will that do in the meantime? But even for them to talk with thee when they are in such a *négligé* is improper.'

'Oh, how tiresome! There, make haste, and come into the drawing-room; Mimi is so anxious to see you!' shouted Lubotchka, still standing outside the door.

As soon as papa had left, I dressed as fast as I could, put on my student's coat, and went into the drawing-room; but Volodja, on the contrary, did not hurry, and remained upstairs for a long time, talking with Jacoff about the places where snipe or other game was to be found. As I have already mentioned, he hated nothing so much as 'being tender with his beloved brother, father, or sister,' as he used to express himself; and avoiding every expression of feeling, he sank into the opposite extreme, and was cold in his manners, which was often taken amiss by people who did not understand the cause. In the entrance-hall I met papa, going nimbly down to take his seat in the carriage. He wore his new fashionable coat from Moscow, and he smelt of perfume. Seeing me, he

cheerfully nodded his head, as if to say, ' You see, am I not splendid ? ' and I was again struck by the happy expression of his eyes, that I had already noticed in the morning.

The drawing-room was still the same high, light room, with a yellow English piano in it, and large open windows, looking out upon the green trees and bright, reddish paths of the garden. After having kissed Mimi and Lubotchka, I was approaching Katenka, when it suddenly occurred to me that it was not proper for me to kiss her, and I stopped silent and blushing. Katenka, not in the least abashed, gave me her white hand, and wished me joy at having entered the university. When Volodja entered the drawing-room, his meeting with Katenka was the same as mine had been. It was, indeed, difficult to decide how we were to meet now after our first separation, after we had grown up together, and during that whole period had seen each other every day. Katenka grew much redder than any of us ; Volodja was not in the least confused, and bowing slightly to her, went to Lubotchka, with whom he also talked a little, and then went out for a walk by himself.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE TERMS ON WHICH WE STOOD WITH THE GIRLS.

VOLODJA looked upon the girls in a strange light ; it would interest him to know whether they were not hungry, whether they had slept well ; he liked them

to be properly dressed, to make no mistakes in speaking French, for which he would have to feel ashamed of them before other people ; but he would not admit the idea that they could have any human feelings or thoughts, and still less did he admit the possibility of arguing with them upon any subject. Whenever they happened to address any serious question to him (a thing they used to avoid doing as much as possible), when they asked him for his opinion about some novel, or about his occupations at the university, he used to make faces at them and walk away in silence, or else he would answer by some distorted French phrase, *Comme si*, *Très joli*, etc., or make a grave, intensely stupid face, and utter some word that had no sense whatever in it, and had nothing to do with the matter in question ; suddenly making his eyes look quite dull, he would utter words such as 'white loaf,' or 'going,' or 'cabbage,' or something of the kind. When I happened to repeat to him what Lubotcha or Katenka had said, he always replied :

'H'm! so thou still undertakest to argue with them? I see thou art still far behind.'

And it was necessary to hear and see him at the time in order to understand the deep, unchangeable contempt which those words expressed. Volodja had been already considered as grown-up for upwards of two years. He was incessantly falling in love with all the pretty women whom he happened to meet with, but though he saw Katenka every day, and though she had begun to wear long dresses two years ago, and grew handsomer every day, he did not even

think of the possibility of falling in love with her. Perhaps it was because the prosaic recollections of infancy, of the ruler of our punishments, of all her childish whims and caprices, etc., were still too fresh in his mind ; perhaps it arose from the repugnance which is often found in very young men for everything at home, or through the general weakness of us all, on meeting with anything good or beautiful, to pass it over with the words, ' Well, I shall come across many such in my life ! '—and then, Volodja did not consider Katenka a woman yet.

Volodja evidently felt time hang heavily on his hands all the summer ; it proceeded from his despising us, a thing he never tried to conceal, as I have just said. The constant expression of his face seemed to say, ' Pooh ! what a nuisance there is nobody to talk to ! ' In the morning he would sometimes go out with his gun, or sit undressed in his room till dinner-time reading. When papa happened to be out, he would even come to dinner with his book, and go on reading at table without talking to any one of us, so that we all felt somehow in the wrong in his presence. In the evenings, too, he used to lie full length on the sofa, fall asleep leaning his head on his elbow, or say the most nonsensical things with a very serious face ; sometimes he would even say things that were not quite proper, so that Mimi would get vexed, and her face grow quite red, while we nearly choked with laughter, but he never deigned to talk seriously with any of the family, except with papa and now and then with me. I involuntarily began to imitate my brother, and to look upon the girls in the same light

as he did, though I was not as afraid of 'tenderness' as he was, and my contempt for the girls was far less steadfast and less deep. During the summer I even sometimes tried to be on more friendly terms with Lubotchka and Katenka, and to chat with them in order to beguile the tedium of the day; but I every time found in them such an absence of all ability to think logically, and such ignorance about the most simple, every-day matters—as, for instance, what money was, what we studied at the university, what war was, etc.—and such an indifference to any explanation about all, that these attempts only strengthened my unfavourable opinion concerning them.

I remember, one evening, Lubotchka was exercising for the hundredth time some intolerably tedious passage on the piano, Volodja was lying on the sofa in the drawing-room and was half asleep, muttering from time to time in a cross, ironical tone, without addressing anybody in particular, 'How she is going on! A musician, indeed! Bee-t-hoven!' (he pronounced the latter word with peculiar irony) famous now once more so!' etc. Katenka and myself remained sitting at the tea-table, and I do not remember how it was that Katenka brought the conversation to bear upon her favourite topic—love. I was in a philosophical mood that day, and began to describe love as being a wish to obtain in a person what one does not possess one's self, etc. But Katenka replied that, on the contrary, it was not love if a girl only thought of getting married to a wealthy man, and that, in her opinion,

wealth was of no importance, and that true love was a feeling that could stand the test of separation. (I understood this as a hint about her love for Doubkoff.) Volodja, who, it seems, had heard our conversation, suddenly rose, and, leaning on his elbow, called out in a tone of inquiry : ‘ Katenka—Russians?’

‘ Nonsense !’ said Katenka.

‘ *Pepperpot ?*’ continued Volodja, accentuating each vowel. And I could not help thinking that Volodja was quite right.

Apart from the general faculties, which are more or less developed in every human being of intellect, feeling, artistic sentiment, there is another faculty more or less developed in different circles of society, and especially in families, which I shall call the faculty of ‘comprehension.’ The essential point of this faculty lies in a conventional feeling of the greater or lesser weight of each other’s actions, and a mutual conventional outlook upon things. Two members of the same circle or the same family possessing that faculty never allow any expression of feeling to go beyond a certain point ; if it do go beyond, they both immediately know it to be nothing but talk. They both see simultaneously where praise ends and irony begins ; where enthusiasm ceases and pretence takes its place, while the same things may seem to outsiders to be very different. People whose outlook is the same invariably see exactly the same degree of absurdity, beauty, or even nastiness, in everything they come across. To facilitate a mutual understanding, the members of a circle or a family often have a language of their own, expressions peculiar to them

alone, or even words which define these various shades of expression which are incomprehensible to others. In our family that sort of mutual understanding was developed to the highest degree between my father and us boys. Doubkoff, too, fitted into our family circle pretty well, and *understood* us; but though Dimitri was a great deal cleverer than Doubkoff, he was backward in that. But between none was the mutual understanding as greatly developed as it was between Volodja and me. Papa was behind-hand with us, and many things that were as clear and plain to us as that twice two is four were incomprehensible to him. For instance, Volodja and I had adopted—I hardly know how it came about—certain words to which we attached some peculiar meaning: *raisins* signified an *ostentatious* desire to show that a man was in possession of money; *shishka*, a cone (in saying which the speaker was required to press his fingers close together and lay a particular stress on both letters *s* and *h*), signified something fresh, healthy, elegant, but not flaunting; a substantive used in the plural signified an unjustifiable passion for that respective thing, etc. However, the meaning depended more on the expression of the face, on the general conversation, so that, whatever new expression signifying any new meaning one of us happened to invent, the other would understand it just the same at a hint. The girls lacked the mutual understanding which existed between us, and that was the principal cause of our moral disunion and of the contempt which we felt for them.

They had, it may be, their own *way* of understand-

ing things, but it did not come up to ours, so that where we saw but empty talk, they saw feeling ; they took our irony for truth, etc. But at the time I did not understand that it was not their fault, and that a lack of mutual understanding between us in no way prevented their being nice and clever girls, and I despised them. Besides, once having conceived the idea of entire frankness, and carrying out the idea to the highest degree myself, I accused the quiet, confiding Lubotchka of concealment and hypocrisy, because she did not find it necessary to examine and investigate all her thoughts and the feelings of her heart. For instance, it seemed to me to be nothing but great hypocrisy in Lubotchka to make the sign of the cross over papa every evening before going to bed, or in both her and Katenka's weeping in the chapel, when they went to attend a Mass said for the repose of our dead mother's soul, or, again, Katenka's way of sighing and turning up her eyeballs when playing the piano, and I asked myself where they could have learned to feign thus, like grown-up people, and how it was they were not ashamed of doing so.

CHAPTER XXX.

MY OCCUPATIONS.

THE present summer, however, brought me nearer to our young ladies than before, on account of my having grown passionately fond of music. In the spring a visit was paid us by one of our neighbours, who came to introduce himself. He was a young gentleman,

and as soon as he entered the reception-room he kept looking at the piano and by slow degrees drew his chair up to it, talking with Mimi and Katenka all the time. After having talked about the weather and the advantages of a country life, he skilfully led the conversation to tuners, then to music, to the piano, and finally declared that he played the piano, and had very soon given us three waltzes, during which time Lubotchka, Mimi, and Katenka stood beside the piano looking at him. The young gentleman never came to see us again after that day; but I liked his playing, his pose at the piano, his way of throwing back his hair, and especially the way he took octaves with his left hand, rapidly turning over the little finger and the thumb to the width of an octave, and then slowly bringing them together and again stretching them out quickly. That graceful gesture, his negligent pose, the throwing back his hair and the attention paid to his talent by the ladies, instilled into me a wish to play the piano. Thanks to this idea, I felt convinced that I possessed talent and love of music. I took to study. In that respect I acted just like millions of people of the male, and especially the female sex, who learn without having a good teacher, without any real vocation, and without the slightest idea what art can give, and how to set about it in order to make it lead to something. For me music, or, rather, playing on the piano, was a means to captivate the girls by my feelings. With the assistance of Katenka, after having learned to read music, and having to a certain degree broken in my thick fingers, which, however, cost me about two

months of such zealous work that I exercised my disobedient fourth finger even at the dinner-table on my knee and in bed on the pillow. I undertook to play musical *pieces*, and played them, of course, with feeling—*avec âme*—as even Katenka admitted, but without keeping time at all.

My choice of pieces was of the well-known order—waltzes, galops, romances, arrangements for the piano, etc.—all the productions of those sweet composers whose compositions every person of good taste would pick out of a heap of beautiful things in a music-shop, and would say, ‘This is what one ought never to play, because nothing worse, nothing more tasteless, and nothing more absurd, has ever been written on music-paper.’ Yet it is just this music that you will find on the piano of every Russian young lady. It is true we had also a few unfortunate pieces, as, for instance, ‘Sonate Pathétique,’ and Bis-moll Sonate of Beethoven, which the girls mutilated (Lubotchka used to play them in remembrance of mamma), and other good music, given her by her teacher in Moscow; but there were likewise the compositions of that same teacher, consisting of the most absurd marches and galops, which Lubotchka also played. Katenka and myself, on the other hand, did not like serious pieces, and preferred ‘Le Fou’ and ‘The Nightingale.’ Katenka played the latter so well that one could not see her fingers move, and I had already learnt to play it pretty loudly and fluently. I had adopted the gesture of the young gentleman, and often regretted that there was no stranger to see me play. But Liszt and Kalkbrenner appeared beyond my strength, and I saw

it was impossible for me to overtake Katenka. Consequently, fancying classical music to be easier, and partly for the sake of eccentricity, I suddenly decided that I loved German scientific music, fell into raptures when Lubotchka played 'Sonate Pathétique,' though, to tell the truth, I had long been heartily sick of it—and I myself began to play Beethoven, and to pronounce the name thus—*Baathoven*. In spite of all this nonsense and pretence, however, as far as I now remember, I did possess musical talent to a certain degree. Music often used to make a deep impression upon me, calling tears to my eyes, and the tunes which I took a liking to I could always manage to play without seeing the music-book ; so that, if anybody had at that time taught me to consider music as a purpose in life, or as an independent pleasure, and not as means of captivating girls by the quickness and the feeling of my play, perhaps I should really have become a fairly good musician.

Another occupation of mine during the summer was the reading of French novels, of which Volodja had brought a great number with him. At that time such novels as 'Monte Cristo' and various Mysteries had only just begun to appear, and I devoured volume after volume of Sue, Dumas and Paul de Coq. All the most unnatural characters and adventures appeared to me true to life. I not only never dared to suspect the author of a lie, but even forgot the existence of the author himself, and saw but real living people, and events which really took place, in the printed pages of the book. Although I had never happened to come across persons similar to those I

read about, I never doubted for a second that they would appear before me in the future.

I detected in myself all the passions described in the book, and a resemblance to all the characters—both heroes and evildoers—in every novel I read, just as a nervous man, on reading some medical book, thinks he feels the symptoms of all possible diseases. I liked the cunning thoughts and the ardent feelings I found in these novels—the wonderful facts, and the uniform characters of the heroes; the good characters—wholly good; the wicked—wholly wicked, precisely as in my early youth I had imagined people to be. I liked very much indeed, too, their being written in French, and I tried to remember all the noble sayings of those noble heroes, so as to make use of them when an opportunity of performing some noble deed presented itself. How many different French phrases did I find out with the assistance of these novels, and store up in my mind for Kolpikoff if I should happen to meet him anywhere, and for *her*, when I should at last see her and confess my love! I had prepared such fine sayings for each of them as would quite stun them. I even formed new ideals of moral merit, based on the novels I read. First of all I wished to be ‘noble’ in all my deeds and actions (I mean ‘noble,’ and not well-born—because the French word *noble* has quite another meaning; I use it in the sense of the German word *nobel*, which they do not confound with *ehrlich*), then to be *passionate*, and finally to be as *comme il faut* as possible. The last was a taste I had long possessed. I tried, even in my appearance and my habits, to resemble the heroes

who were described as possessing any of these merits. I remember, in one of the hundred novels which I had been reading during the summer, there was one extremely passionate hero with bushy eyebrows, and I wished so much to resemble him in appearance (morally I felt I was quite like him) that, when I looked at my eyebrows in the looking-glass, I took it into my head to cut them a little shorter, so as to make them grow thicker; but when I began to cut them, I happened to cut more in one place than in another; then it had to be made even, and the end was that, to my horror, I beheld myself in the looking-glass without any eyebrows at all, and, consequently, looking very ugly. However, hoping that in a short time I should have bushy eyebrows like the passionate hero, I felt comforted, and only troubled about what I was to say to all at home when they saw me without eyebrows. I took some of Volodja's gunpowder, rubbed it on my brows, and lit it. Although the powder did not take fire, I looked sufficiently as if I had scorched my face. The cunning trick was not found out by anyone, and, indeed, by the time I had already forgotten all about the passionate man, my eyebrows came out much thicker.

CHAPTER XXXI.

COMME IL FAUT.

I HAVE referred several times already in this tale to the idea of the French words I place at the head of this chapter, and now feel it necessary to devote a whole chapter to that subject, which has been during

my whole life one of the most pernicious, most erroneous notions inculcated into me by the way in which I was brought up, and the society in which I was placed.

The human race may be divided into a multitude of classes—into rich and poor, good and bad, military and civil, clever and stupid, etc. ; but every man, at all events, possesses a pet subdivision of his own, under which he unconsciously places each new person he meets. My favourite and principal subdivision of people at the time I am writing about was into two classes, into people *comme il faut* and people *not comme il faut*. The second class was again subdivided into people who were properly speaking *not comme il faut*, and into common people. I esteemed people that were *comme il faut* and considered them as worthy of being on equal terms with me ; the second I pretended to despise, but, in fact, simply detested them, having a sort of injured personal feeling towards them ; I ignored the third altogether, and utterly despised them. *My* *comme il faut* consisted, first of all, and chiefly, in speaking French well, and especially in a correct pronounciation of the language. A man who spoke French with a bad accent immediately awoke a feeling of detestation in me. ‘ Why do you want to speak as we do if you do not know how to do so ? ’ I used ill-naturedly to ask him in my thoughts. The second condition of *comme il faut* was to wear the nails long, well-shaped and clean ; the third was to know how to bow, to dance, and to converse ; the fourth, and a very important one, was a perfect indifference to every-

thing, and a constant expression of a certain exquisite contemptuous weariness. Besides all this there were general signs by which, without speaking to the person, I used to determine to which class that person belonged. Except the decoration of the room, the gloves, the handwriting, the carriage, the principal signs were the feet. The shape of the boots immediately stamped a person's position in my opinion. Boots without heels, with sharp points, and the trousers narrow towards the feet, and without straps, showed a man to be 'common,' vulgar; a boot with a narrow round toe, with heels and pantaloons narrow at the foot, with straps to them encircling the foot, or wide pantaloons with straps, nearly covering the toe, denoted a man *mauvais genre*, etc.

It is strange that this notion went to such an extent in me, who had positively no disposition to be *comme il faut*. But perhaps it was just because I had an immense difficulty in attaining to that degree myself that it took such a deep root in me. It is awful to think what an amount of inestimable time—the best part of my life, at the age of sixteen—I spent in attaining this quality. All those whom I used to imitate—Volodja, Doubkoff, and the greater part of my acquaintances—seemed to have attained it very easily. I looked at them with jealousy and secretly studied French, cultivated the science of bowing without looking at the person I was bowing to; studied conversation, dancing, cultivated indifference towards all around me, and pretended weariness; I worked at my nails, cutting the flesh around with scissors, and yet I felt that there was still a great deal

left to do in order to attain my purpose. As to my room, my writing-table, my carriage, I did not in the least know how to manage to give them an air of *comme il faut*, although I tried hard, in spite of my hatred for practical work of any kind. Everything seemed to go right with others without any trouble at all, as if it could not be otherwise. I remember once, after much useless exertion over my nails, I asked Doubkoff, who had wonderfully good nails, how long he had possessed such nice nails, and how he managed to keep them so. Doubkoff answered, 'I never remember to have had them otherwise, and never did anything to make them so. I cannot understand how well-bred people can have them otherwise.' His answer vexed me considerably. I did not know at that time that one of the principal conditions of *comme il faut* was the concealing all the difficulty with which that same *comme il faut* was attained. I considered *comme il faut* not merely a very important item, a great quality, a perfection which I was anxious to attain, but an indispensable condition of life, without which there could be no happiness, no reputation, nothing good in the world. I should not have esteemed either an eminent artist, a learned man, or a benefactor of the human race, unless he had been *comme il faut*. A man who was *comme il faut* was incomparably superior to all other men in my eyes; he left it to others to paint pictures, to write music, books, to do good—he even admired them for doing so. Why should he not admire good qualities in any who may possess them; but he could never place himself on a level with them, for he was

comme il faut, and they were not—that was all. It even seemed to me that if we had had a brother, a mother, or a father who were not comme il faut, I should have said it was a misfortune ; but in such a case I could have nothing in common with them. But it was not the loss of the precious time which I spent in constant endeavours to observe all the hard conditions of comme il faut, and which excluded all serious enthusiasm, nor the detestation and scorn with which I considered nine-tenths of the human race, nor my indifference towards all that was beautiful beyond the circle of comme il faut, that did me most harm. The great evil lay in the conviction that comme il faut was an independent position in society ; that a man need not be a public functionary, a carriage-builder, a soldier, or a learned man, as long as he is comme il faut ; that having attained that position he had already fulfilled his purpose in life, and even occupied a higher position than the great mass of humanity.

At a certain period of one's youth, after many errors and mistakes, each man usually finds himself under the necessity of taking an active part in social life. He chooses some branch of work, and devotes himself to the same ; but with a man who is comme il faut this is seldom the case. I knew and know a great many old people, proud, self-confident people, harsh in their judgments, who if, in the next world, they are asked, 'Who are you? and what have you done on earth?' would be unable to answer otherwise than, 'Je fus un homme très comme il faut!'

This was the fate that awaited me.

CHAPTER XXXII.

YOUTH.

NOTWITHSTANDING the confusion of ideas which existed in my head, I was, during that summer, young, innocent, free, and therefore almost happy.

Sometimes, and not unfrequently, I used to rise early in the morning. (I slept in the open air on the terrace, and the glaring slanting beams of the morning sun often used to wake me.) I would dress myself quickly, take a towel under my arm and a French novel, and go to bathe in the river under the shade of a birch wood, which was half a mile from our house. There I used to lie down in the shade on the grass and read, now and then taking my eyes off the book in order to glance at the purple surface of the shaded stream, rippling in the morning breeze; at the field of ripening rye, on the other bank of the river; at the morning light of the sun, still slightly red, as he cast his rays lower and lower upon the white trunks of the birch-trees, which, hiding themselves one behind the other, disappeared in the far distance of the dense woods, and I rejoiced in the consciousness of possessing the same fresh, young strength of life with which all nature breathed around me. When the sky was overcast by gray morning clouds and I felt cold after bathing, I would frequently take a long walk without aim or purpose among the fields and woods, delighted to feel my feet wet with the fresh dew. At such times I thought of the heroes

whom I had read about in the last novel, and fancied myself either the chief of an army, a minister, some extraordinary strong man, or a man passionately in love, and would look round tremblingly, hoping to meet *her* somewhere in the field or behind a tree. When, during these walks, I happened to meet peasants or peasant-girls at their work, although I completely ignored *common people*, I always unconsciously experienced great shyness, and tried to pass without their seeing me. When it grew too warm out of doors, and before the ladies had come down to breakfast, I used frequently to go into the kitchen-garden or fruit-garden to eat the ripe fruit and vegetables. That was one of my greatest pleasures. Sometimes it would happen that I went into the orchard and right into the middle of a high, densely overgrown, bushy raspberry-shrub. Above my head the bright glowing sky, around me the pale-green, prickly foliage of the raspberry-bushes, intermixed with weeds. Dark-green nettles, with thin blooming crowns, rose gracefully upwards before me; burdock, with strange pinkish-blue prickly blossoms, grew higher than the raspberry-bushes and higher than my head, and here and there, intermixed with nettles, reached even to the irregular, pale-green branches of the old apple-trees, on the top of which, in spite of the burning sun, the round, unripe apples shone like little ivory balls. Beneath grew a young raspberry-shrub, almost dried up and without any foliage; but it still stretched its boughs towards the sun, and the green prickly grass and young burdock, piercing through last season's dry leafage touched with dew, looked

sappy and green in the shade, as if unconscious how brightly the sunbeams played over the foliage of the apple-tree.

Amid these bushes it is always damp; there is a smell of spiders' webs, of fallen apples, which lie rotting on the damp ground; of raspberries, and frequently of cherries, which you sometimes happen to swallow by accident together with a berry, and then quickly eat another berry to drive away the unpleasant taste. As you walk along you rouse the sparrows that always live in this covert; you hear their busy twittering and the rustling of their little wings against the twigs; you hear in one direction the humming of a drone-bee, and in another the gardener's footsteps resound along the pathway, or those of Akim, the idiot, with his incessant mumbling. I say to myself, 'No! neither he nor anybody in the world will ever find me out here.' . . . With both hands I pick the juicy berries right and left from the white stalks, and swallow one after the other. My feet are wet through; my head is full of absurd fancies; my hands and legs smart from the nettles; the sunbeams straight above my head pierce through the thicket and scorch it; I can eat no more, but still sit in the thicket looking, listening, thinking, and unconsciously plucking and swallowing the best berries.

By eleven o'clock I generally used to come into the drawing-room, after tea, when the ladies were already sitting at their work. Near the first window, with its unbleached linen blinds drawn down, stand embroidery-frames, covered with white linen, on which

you see the flies walking drowsily ; the sun casts his bright light through the chinks in the blinds upon everything that happens to come in his way, forming circles which make one's eyes ache by their brilliancy. Behind the embroidery-frames sits Mimi, angrily shaking her head, and moving from one place to another in order to get out of the sun, which, finding some unexpected opening, throws a bright streak over her face or hands. The other three windows cast regular bright squares from the shadows of the window-frames upon the unpainted floor in the drawing-room. On one of them lies Milka—her usual habit—and, pricking up her ears, watches the flies that walk along the bright floor. Katenka knits or reads, sitting on the sofa, and nervously fans herself with her little white hands, which look transparent in the bright sun, or, wrinkling up her face, shakes her little head in order to drive away a fly, which has been caught in her thick golden hair. Lubotchka either walks up and down the room, her hands behind her, waiting to go into the garden, or plays some tune which has long been familiar to me. I take a seat somewhere, listen to the music or the reading, and wait till I, in my turn, can take possession of the seat at the piano. After dinner I sometimes did the girls the favour to accompany them in a ride (I considered walking below my age and my social position). And our rides used to be very pleasant. I often took the party into out-of-the-way places and down ravines. Sometimes we would meet with some adventure ; then I would give proofs of manliness, and the ladies would praise me for my riding and courage, and consider me

their protector. In the evening, when we had no visitors, after tea, which we took in the shady gallery, and after a walk with papa over the estate, I would take my old seat on the armchair, and listen to Katenka or Lubotchka playing the piano, reading at the same time, or dreaming in my old way. Sometimes, when alone in the drawing-room, and Lubotchka played some old well-known tune, I would involuntarily drop my book and fix my gaze on the open door of the balcony, on the curling branches of the tall birch-trees, which were already growing dim in the evening shade, and on the clear sky, where, on looking fixedly at it, I would see a yellowish little spot suddenly appear, and then disappear again; and, listening to the music in the sitting-room, to the creaking of the gates, to the women's voices outside, and the noise of the herd returning to the village, I would remember Natalia Savishna, mamma, Carl Ivanovitch, and grow sad for a minute or two. But my heart at that time was so full of life and hope, that the remembrance would vanish as rapidly as it came.

After supper, and after an evening walk with somebody in the garden—I was afraid to walk alone in the dark avenues—I would go to bed. I slept on the floor in the veranda—a circumstance which afforded me unbounded satisfaction, notwithstanding the millions of gnats that stung me most unmercifully. On moonlit nights I frequently passed hour after hour sitting on my mattress, gazing fixedly at the light and shadows, enjoying the perfect quietness around, letting my fancy roam at will, dreaming of the

poetical happiness of passionate love, which then seemed to me the greatest happiness in the world, and grieving that up to that time I could only enjoy it in fancy. It often happened that, when all had retired for the night, when the lights had passed from the sitting-room to the upper rooms, whence women's voices and the opening and shutting of windows could be heard, I would go to the gallery and walk up and down, eagerly listening to every sound as all gradually sank to rest. As long as there is a little even idle hope of happiness, even if not such entire happiness as I longed for, I could not give way to dreams of imaginary happiness.

At every sound of bare footsteps, at every cough or sigh, at every closing of a window or rustling of a dress, I would jump out of my bed, listen stealthily, watch, and grow excited without any obvious reason. And now the lights disappear from the upper windows, the sounds of steps and talking are succeeded by snoring, the watchman's rattle is heard; the garden has become more gloomy and lighter at the same time, as soon as streaks of red light thrown on it from the windows have disappeared; the last light from the butler's room passes into the entrance-hall, casting rays of light along the dewy garden, and I can see through the window the hunch-backed figure of Foka, a candle in his hand, going up to bed. I very often found an exciting pleasure in stealing along the damp grass, under the dark shadow of the house, towards the window of the entrance-hall, and standing there, breathlessly listening to the snoring of the boy and the grumbling of Foka, who thought himself un-

heard, or the sound of his aged voice saying long, long prayers. At last his candle is put out, the window is closed; I am left alone, and look timidly around to see if there is not some 'woman in white' to be seen near the flower-bed or at my bedside, then quickly run back to the veranda. I then went to bed, with my face towards the garden, and covering myself up as well as possible to protect myself from the gnats and the bats, I looked into the garden, listening to the sounds of night and letting my fancy dwell upon love and happiness.

Everything looked so different then—the old birch-trees glistening on one side in the moonlit sky, with their curly branches; on the other, dimly sheathing the shrubs and the pathway with their dark shades. And the calm, stately trees, the glitter of the pond, and the moonlit sparkle of the dewdrops on the flowers in front of the veranda, which threw their graceful shadows across the dark border of the flower-bed; the sound of a quail beyond the pond, a human voice on the mainroad, and the calm, hushed creaking of two old birch-trees standing close to each other; the humming of a gnat over my ear under the blanket, and the falling of an apple, after catching at a branch, on the dry leaves; the noise of the frogs, which sometimes come close to the terrace, and looked so mysteriously bright in the moonlight, with their greenish backs—all assumed a strange character in my eyes, a character of great beauty and of incomplete happiness. And now *she* would appear before me with her long, dark tresses, her rounded shape, pensive and beautiful with her bare arms and volup-

tuous embraces. She loved me, and for one minute of her love I would sacrifice my whole life. But the moon rose higher and higher, and became lighter and lighter in the sky; the grand glittering of the pond and of the dewdrops grew clearer and clearer, the shadows grew darker and darker, the light more and more limpid, and while watching and listening to all this, a voice whispered to me that even *she*, with her bare arms and her passionate embraces, was not true happiness, that love for her was not full bliss; and the more I looked at the high, full moon, the higher and higher, purer and purer, did true beauty and bliss appear, and nearer and nearer I drew to Him who is the Source of all that is beautiful and good, and tears of unsatisfied but agitating joy filled my eyes.

And still I was alone, and it seemed to me that Nature, in her mysterious grandeur drawing towards herself the bright light of the moon, which for some reason remained in some distant vague spot in the pale-blue sky, and yet was everywhere, and seemed to fill the entire unbounded expanse, and I, an insignificant worm, already contaminated by all the littleness, the foulness of human passions, but with unbounded power of love—it seemed to me, I say, at that time as if Nature, the moon and myself were one and the same.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

NEIGHBOURS.

ON the first day of our arrival I was greatly astonished at papa's calling our neighbours, the Epifanoffs, nice people, and it surprised me still more to learn that he

frequently went to see them. For a very long time we had a lawsuit with the Epifanoffs about some land. While quite a child I had more than once heard papa angrily abusing the Epifanoffs, and he invited various people, in order (as far as I could understand) that they should defend him against them. I had heard Jacob speak of them as 'our enemies,' and as 'black people;'^{*} and I remember that mamma once requested that in her house and in her presence their names should never be mentioned.

From these facts I had during my childhood imbibed so firm and clear an idea that the Epifanoffs were *enemies*, who were ready to murder not only papa, but his son too, if he should happen to fall into their hands, and that they were in a literal sense *black people*, that when in the year of mother's death I saw Avdotja Vassilievna Epifanoff (la belle Flamande) nursing my mother, I could hardly believe her to be one of those black people, and still retained the worst possible opinion of the family. Though we often saw them during the summer I had a strange prejudice against the whole family. However, I must tell the reader who the Epifanoffs really were. The family consisted of the mother, a widow of fifty, a fresh and cheerful old lady; the daughter, named Avdotja Vassilievna, who was very beautiful; and a son, who stammered in his speech, named Peter Vassilievitch: he was unmarried, had left the army, with the grade of lieutenant, and was of a very serious disposition.

Anna Dimitrievna Epifanoff,† for about twenty years before her husband's death, had lived apart

* Base, low people.

† The old lady.

from him, at one time in St. Petersburg, where she had relations, but mostly in the country on her own estate of Mytistschi, which was two miles from us. In the neighbourhood people gave such dreadful accounts of her that Messalina seemed an innocent child in comparison with her. That was why mamma had requested the name of Epifanoff never to be even mentioned in her house ; but to say the truth, no one could believe even the tenth part of what the most malicious of all gossips—the village-gossips of the neighbourhood—said. When I knew Anna Dimitrievna I found that in spite of there being at her house a clerk named Mitinska, a former serf of hers, who, with his well-oiled curly hair and a coat like those worn by Circassians, always stood behind her chair during dinner, and to whom she often used to call her guests' attention, asking them in French to admire his beautiful eyes and mouth, there was nothing really so bad as the people reported. It is true that for the last ten years, ever since Anna Dimitrievna had recalled her son Petrousha from the military service, she had entirely changed her mode of life. Anna Dimitrievna's estate was a small one ; she possessed a little more than a hundred souls,* and the sums she had spent during her gay life were considerable, so that ten years ago the estate, which was mortgaged twice, the interest being still unpaid, was to be sold by auction. In these very urgent circumstances, thinking that the wardship, the taking an inventory of the estate, the arrival of law authorities, and similar disagreeables, were caused not so

* Serfs.

much by default of payment, as in consequence of her being a woman, Anna Dimitrievna had written to her son, asking him to come and save his mother.

Though Peter Vassilievitch's career was going on so satisfactory that he had hoped soon to be independent, he threw up all his prospects, resigned the service, and like a good son, thinking it his first duty to comfort his aged mother (as he quite sincerely wrote to her in his letter), came back to the country.

Notwithstanding his unsightly appearance, his clumsiness and his stuttering, Peter Vassilievitch was a man of extremely firm principles and unusual practical good sense. Somehow, by small loans, transactions, entreaties and promises he succeeded in retaining the land. Having become a landlord, Peter Vassilievitch put on his father's wadded great-coat, which had been kept in the store-room, did away with the carriages and horses, kept visitors away from Mytistschi, enlarged the ground to be ploughed, abated the peasants' land, had the wood cut down by his own peasants, and sold it profitably, thus improving the state of affairs. Peter Vassilievitch vowed, and kept his vow, not to wear anything but his father's wadded great-coat and a linen overcoat, which he had made for himself, and not to drive about otherwise than in a cart drawn by peasants' horses until all debts were paid. This stoical style of life he tried to enforce on the whole family, as far as his servile respect for his mother admitted of—respect which he considered it his duty to pay. When he was in the drawing-room he deferred in all things

to his mother, never denied a single request of hers, and scolded the servants whenever they disobeyed Anna Dimitrievna's commands; but in his working-room or in the office he reprimanded sternly even if a duck were killed for the dinner without his permission, or if a man were sent to some neighbour's by Anna Dimitrievna's order to inquire about the state of the said neighbour's health, or if a peasant girl, instead of weeding in the kitchen-garden, were sent into the woods to gather some raspberries.

In about four years all debts were paid, and Peter Vassilievitch, having been to Moscow, returned thence with new clothes and in a new chaise. But notwithstanding this flourishing state of affairs he still continued the same stoical style of living, on which, it seemed, he gloomily prided himself, and would often stammer out, 'Whoever really cares to see me will be just as glad to see me in the great wadded coat, and will surely not refuse to partake of my cabbage-soup and my gruel. Do not I eat it?' added he. In every word and gesture he showed his pride, based on the consciousness of having sacrificed himself for his mother and having redeemed the land, and his scorn for all those who had not accomplished a similar task.

The mother and daughter had entirely different dispositions, and were in many respects very unlike each other. The mother was one of the most pleasant, kind-hearted, cheerful women in society. She really enjoyed anything gay or pleasant, and there was in her disposition a trait which is only to be found in truly kind-hearted men and women—she liked to see young people enjoy themselves. Her

daughter, Avdotja Vassilievna was, on the contrary, grave, or, rather, had that peculiarly cold, absent, haughty disposition which is the general characteristic of handsome unmarried women. When she tried to be gay, her cheerfulness seemed forced, unnatural, as if she were always either ridiculing herself or those she was talking to, or the world in general. I often wondered what she could mean by saying, as she sometimes did, 'Oh yes, I am very beautiful; everybody is in love with me, of course,' and so on. Anna Dimitrievna was always bustling about; she liked her house and garden to be neat and pretty; was passionately fond of flowers, birds, and all sorts of pretty baubles. Her rooms and her garden were small and very simple, but all looked so neat and clean, all bore such an impress of cheerfulness, like that inspired by the tune of some merry waltz or polka—that the term 'a toy,' often applied to her house by her guests, suited it and the garden perfectly well. And Anna Dimitrievna, small and thin, with a fresh complexion, pretty little hands, a cheerful look, and always becomingly dressed, looked like a toy herself. The dark, swollen veins on her little hands were the only things that marred the attractiveness of her general appearance. Avdotja Vassilievna, on the contrary, hardly ever did anything, cared nothing about flowers, was negligent of her own personal appearance, and was always obliged to go up and dress in order to be fit to be seen, when anybody called upon them. But when she did come down, after having changed her dress, she always looked very handsome, in spite of the cold, passionless

expression of eyes and lips, which always characterizes very handsome faces. Her classically regular and beautiful features and her graceful figure seemed to say, 'You are at liberty to admire me.'

Yet, in spite of the mother's loneliness, and the daughter's cold, distant manner, you instinctively felt that the former did not love, and never had loved, anything except pretty trifles, and that Avdotja Vassilievna was one of those with whom to love once was to love for ever.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MY FATHER MARRIES AGAIN.

MY father was about forty-eight when he contracted a second marriage with Avdotja Vassilievna Epifanoff.

I suppose that when he came to his estate in the spring with the girls, he was in that restlessly happy, sociable state of mind which a man often experiences when he has won largely at cards. He felt that he was in luck—a luck which, if he did not choose to expend it in card-playing, might help him to be successful in other things. Besides, it was springtime, he had more money than usual, he was quite alone, and time hung heavily on his hands. In his talks with Jacob that endless lawsuit with the Epifanoffs must have been recalled to his mind, and with it the remembrance of the beautiful Avdotja Vassilievna,

whom he had not seen for some time ; and I can fancy him saying to Jacob, ' Well, you see, Jacob, what is the use of going on with that lawsuit ? I think I had better give up that accursed piece of land to them. Eh ? what do you think ? '

I can fancy the twitching of Jacob's fingers behind his back at the question, and his endeavours to convince my father that ' After all, we are in the right, Peter Alexandrovitch. '

So, I suppose, papa ordered the horses to be harnessed, put on his fashionable olive-coloured coat, brushed back his scanty hair, scented his pocket-handkerchief, and in the best possible spirits, partly because he felt that he was acting in a gentlemanly way, but chiefly because he hoped to see a handsome woman, drove off to call on his neighbours.

I only know that father did not find Peter Vassilievitch at home when he called, and spent an hour or two with the ladies. I can fancy how agreeable he was, how he fascinated them as he sat tapping the ground lightly with his soft boot, lipping as he looked sweetly at them. I can fancy how fond the merry little old lady immediately was of him, and how her handsome daughter's gravity gradually gave way to a more cheerful manner.

When the household drudge came running breathlessly to tell Peter Vassilievitch that old Irtenjeff himself had come to call upon him, I can fancy him answering sullenly, ' Well, what of that ? ' I can fancy how he walked home more slowly than usual, and, perhaps, even first stepped into his own room to put on his dirtiest coat, and then sent a message to the

cook strictly forbidding any addition to the usual bill of fare, whatever orders the ladies might have given to the contrary.

I have often seen my father and Epifanoff together since, so I can easily picture to myself their first meeting. I am sure that though papa proposed to him to put an end to the lawsuit amicably, Peter Vassilievitch kept his sullen look, and felt cross because he had sacrificed his career for his mother's sake, and papa had not had to do anything of the kind. I feel sure that papa seemed to be quite unconscious of his host's ill-temper, and was playful and merry, treating him as a whimsical fellow—a term which seemed to offend Peter Vassilievitch at times. Papa, in his jesting way, would call Peter Vassilievitch 'colonel,' and though I myself once heard him say, stammering more than ever, that he was not a co-lo-nel, but a lieu-lieu-te-tenant, five minutes after papa again addressed him as 'colonel.'

Lubotchka told me that before we returned from town they had seen the Epifanoffs every day, and had a very pleasant time. With the gift papa possessed of doing things oddly and merrily, but simply and elegantly at the same time, he organized hunting-parties, fishing-parties, fireworks, etc., to all of which the Epifanoffs were invited. 'It would have been still more pleasant,' added Lubotchka, 'if that tiresome Peter Vassilievitch had not been present; but there he always was, sulking, stammering, and spoiling all.

After our arrival the Epifanoffs only came to our house twice, and we called upon them once. After

St. Peter's Day, when they and a number of other guests called, for it was papa's birthday, we entirely ceased seeing each other, and only papa visited them occasionally.

During the short time that I saw papa in the society of Dounitchka, as her mother called her, I noticed that he was always in the same happy frame of mind which had struck me on the first day of our arrival. He was so gay, so youthful, so full of life and happiness, that he shed a brightness all around which imparted itself to us all. He never left Avdotja Vassilievna's side when she was in the room, and paid her such lackadaisical compliments that I felt ashamed to hear him, or else he would sit staring at her in silence, twitching his shoulders and hemming; or he would talk to her in a low voice, smiling all the time. Whatever he did was done in that half-jesting manner peculiar to him even in the most serious matters.

The look of happiness I had noticed on my father's face seemed to have imparted itself to Avdotja Vassilievna's as well, and shone in her large blue eyes, except when, every now and then, such a fit of shyness would suddenly come over her that I, who knew the feeling well, would feel quite sorry and pained for her. At such moments she evidently feared to move or look up; she seemed to feel as if all were looking at her, thinking of her, and criticising her behaviour. She would at such times cast a frightened glance around, her colour would come and go, and she would begin to talk very loudly, making some foolish observation, and then blushing still

deeper on seeing that papa and all the others that were present had heard it. I noticed that these fits of shyness often followed the mention of some young and pretty woman's name in papa's hearing. Such frequent changes from her habitual pensiveness to the strange, forced gaiety I have mentioned, the way she would repeat papa's favourite words and sayings, would have opened my eyes to the state of things had the chief actor not been my father, or had I been a little older; as it was, I had no suspicions, even when papa seemed greatly put out by a letter which he received from Peter Vassilievitch, and did not go to the Epifanoff's any more till the end of August.

Towards the close of the month of August, however, papa again began to visit at our neighbours', and on the day before we (*i.e.*, Volodja and I) left for Moscow, he told us that Avdotja Vassilievna Epifanoff and he were engaged.

CHAPTER XXXV.

HOW WE RECEIVE THE NEWS.

ON the eve of the formal announcement the whole household knew already that father was going to contract a second marriage, and many were the surmises that the circumstance gave rise to. Mimi kept her room all day and wept. Katenka stayed with her, and only came down for dinner, wearing an expression of wounded feeling evidently caught from her mother. Lubotchka was, on the contrary, in high

spirits, and told us, as we sat at table, that she knew such a nice secret, but that she would not tell us what it was.

‘Thy secret is not a nice one at all,’ said Volodja, who did not share her delight in the least. ‘If thou wert capable of any serious thought, thou wouldst see thyself that it is, on the contrary, a very unpleasant one.’

Lubotchka glanced at him with surprise, but did not answer.

After dinner Volodja was about to take me by the hand, when he abruptly changed his mind, fearing, I suppose, that his doing so would seem too ‘tender,’ and only signed to me to follow him into the hall.

‘Dost thou know the secret Lubotchka has been talking about?’ said he, as soon as we were alone.

We seldom had any private talks with Volodja on any serious subject, so that when such a thing did occur, we both felt awkward, and did not know where to look. Now, however, in spite of the embarrassment he read in my eyes, he continued to gaze fixedly at me, with a look which seemed to say, ‘There is no need for thee to feel any embarrassment, we are brothers, and it is our duty to consult together upon important family affairs.’ I understood what his look meant ; he continued :

‘Papa is going to make that Miss Epifanoff his wife. Dost thou know it?’

I nodded assent, for I had already heard the news.

‘It is a very unpleasant thing,’ continued Volodja.

‘Why so?’

‘Why,’ retorted he, ‘dost thou think it very pleasant to have that stammering colonel for an uncle? And then, she herself looks kind and nice now, but how do we know what she may turn out to be? It matters but little to us, I grant, but Lubotchka will soon “come out.” It will not be very pleasant for her to go into society with a stepmother like that. She is a *poissarde*, and nothing else. Even supposing she be kind-hearted, still she is but a *poissarde*,’ added Volodja, evidently very well pleased to have found that denomination for her.

It seemed a strange thing to hear Volodja criticising papa’s choice in the matter, yet I could not help fully agreeing with him.

‘Why does papa want to marry?’ I asked.

‘Who knows? There is something very mysterious about the matter altogether. I only know that Peter Vassilievitch tried to induce him to marry her, even insisted upon his doing so, and papa refused at first, then changed his mind, prompted by some chivalrous fancy or other. It is a mysterious affair altogether. It is only now that I begin to understand father’s disposition.’ (It struck me disagreeably to hear him say ‘father’ instead of saying ‘papa,’ as he usually did.) ‘He is a downright good man, a kind and clever man, but amazingly thoughtless and careless! He cannot see a pretty woman without losing his head. I think thou knowest that there is not a single woman amongst all his acquaintances that he has not been in love with some time or other. Even Mimi—only think!’

‘Indeed!’

‘I tell thee, I found out, a short time ago, that he was in love with Mimi when she was young; wrote verses addressed to her, and all sorts of things went on. Mimi is still heart-broken.’

And Volodja burst out laughing.

‘Impossible!’ murmured I, in astonishment.

‘But the chief thing,’ continued Volodja, growing serious again, and suddenly beginning to speak French, ‘is that all our relations will be vexed. And she will have children very likely.’

I was struck dumb by Volodja’s forethought and good sense.

Lubotchka came up to us at that moment and exclaimed joyously, ‘So you know it too!’

‘Yes,’ said Volodja; ‘and I am surprised at thee, Lubotchka—thou art not a baby—to rejoice at papa’s marrying such a horrid creature!’

Lubotchka looked gravely and thoughtfully at us.

‘Volodja! Why dost thou think her a horrid creature? How darest thou speak thus of Avdotja Vassilievna? If papa intends to make her his wife, she cannot be a horrid creature!’

‘Well, perhaps not; I certainly so called her, nevertheless . . .’

‘There is no “nevertheless” in the case,’ exclaimed Lubotchka angrily. ‘I did not say that the girl thou wast in love with was a horrid creature. How durst thou speak thus of papa and that excellent lady? Thou art the eldest, I grant, but that does not make it right for thee to speak thus. Thou oughtest not to speak thus to me.’

‘Why cannot we reason about . . .’

‘We have no right to reason,’ interrupted Lubotchka. ‘We have no right to criticise the actions of a father like ours. Let Mimi do so if she chooses ; but not thou, not our elder brother.’

‘Thou dost not understand,’ said Volodja scornfully. ‘Think a little. Is it a pleasant thought that Dounitchka will take the place of our dead mother?’

Lubotchka’s eyes filled with tears, and she was silent for a moment.

‘I knew thou wast proud, but never thought thou wast so ill-natured,’ said she, as she left the room.

‘Bunny,’ said Volodja, with a comic grimace, but with his eyes rather dim. ‘What’s the use of talking with them?’ continued he, as if vexed with himself for having condescended to enter into conversation with Lubotchka.

The weather was bad, and neither papa nor the ladies had come down to breakfast, when I entered the parlour the next morning. A cold autumnal rain had fallen all night ; the sky was covered with clouds, through which the round ball of the sun might be dimly seen high above our heads. It was a damp, chill, windy day. The door which led into the garden was open ; the pools made by the rain during the night were gradually drying. The open door shook in the wind in spite of the iron hook ; the gravel-paths were damp and muddy ; the old birch-trees, with their white, leafless branches ; the shrubs, the grass, the nettles, currant-bushes, black-elder trees shook as if they were being torn up by the roots ; round yellow leaves chased each other and whirled along the lime-tree avenue until, soaked through and

through, they lay still at last on the wet ground, or on the dark verdure of the lawn. I thought of my father's approaching marriage, considering the event from the same point of view as Volodja had done. Neither the future of our sister, our father or ourselves seemed to offer a pleasant prospect. I hated to think that a stranger, and, above all, a young woman, was going to take the place of . . . whom? and that without her having any right to do so; a 'young lady' was to occupy the place which had been my dead mother's! I felt very sad, and the more I reflected the more convinced I felt that my father was in the wrong. At that very moment I heard him and Volodja talking in the entrance-hall. Not wishing to see my father just then, I stepped aside; but Lubotchka soon came for me, saying that papa wanted me.

He was standing in the drawing-room, leaning his hand on the piano, and was looking impatiently and very solemnly towards the door, through which I entered. The look of youthfulness and happiness, which I had lately noticed on his face, was no more. He looked sad. Volodja was walking up and down the room, smoking. I went up to my father and wished him good-morning.

'Well, my friends,' said he, raising his head and speaking rapidly, as people usually do when they have to announce something unpleasant which is irremediable, 'you know, I suppose, that Avdotja Vassilievna is going to be my wife.' He was silent for a moment, then went on: 'I never intended to marry again, but' . . . another pause . . . 'but . . .

but fate has willed otherwise. Dounitchka is a kind-hearted, good girl, and not very young. I hope you will love her, children ; she already loves you ; she is a good girl. Now,' added he, turning to Volodja and me, and speaking hurriedly, as if to prevent our interrupting him, 'now it is time for you to return to town. I shall remain here till the new year, and shall then come up to town'—he hesitated again—'with my wife and Lubotchka.' It pained me to see father looking timid, as if he felt himself in the wrong, and I drew nearer to him ; but Volodja did not raise his head, and went on walking up and down the room.

'So, my friends, you see what the old man has taken into his head,' continued papa, reddening, coughing nervously, and holding out his hands to Volodja and me. There were tears in his eyes as he spoke, and I noticed that the hand he held out to Volodja, who was at that time at the other end of the room, trembled slightly. The sight of that trembling hand sent a thrill through me, and a strange thought came into my mind and touched me—it was that father had been in active service in 1812, and had been, as I well knew, a very brave warrior. I took his large, muscular hand in mine, and kissed it. He squeezed mine hard, and with a sudden sob took Lubotchka's little black head with both his hands and kissed her eyes over and over again. Volodja feigned to have let his pipe fall, and while stooping as if he were picking it up, stealthily wiped his eyes with his fist, then, trying to be unobserved, left the room.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE UNIVERSITY.

THE wedding was to take place in a fortnight's time, but the lectures had begun at the university, so we had to return to Moscow in the beginning of September. The Neklioudoffs had also returned. Dimitri (we had promised each other to write often, and, of course, neither of us had done so) immediately came to see me, and it was agreed between us that he should call for me the next day, and we were to go together to my first lecture at the university.

It was a bright, sunny day.

No sooner had I entered the auditorium than I felt that my individuality sank into nothing in the midst of that young, merry crowd, which noisily thronged the doorways and spacious corridors, in the bright sunshine which streamed through the spacious windows. The consciousness of being now a member of that large corporation was very pleasant. I had few acquaintances amongst them, and knew even those but slightly, so that our only intercourse was a careless nod and a 'Good-morning.' Shaking of hands, good-humoured pushes, friendly words, smiles and jokes, passed around. I saw there was a friendly link amongst all those young folks, and sadly felt that I was out of it. It was but a momentary feeling, however. My vexation at being thus overlooked soon made me find that it was better thus; that I had nothing in common with them; that I ought to have

a circle of my own, consisting of 'genteel young men,' and I took my seat on the third bench, near Count B., Baron Z., Prince R., young Ivin, and others of the same rank.

I was acquainted with Ivin and Count B. But all these young men looked at me in a way that made me feel as if I were not one of them either. I watched all that went on around me. Semenoff, with his gray, matted hair and his white teeth, was sitting, with his coat unbuttoned, at a little distance from me, and was leaning back, biting his pen. The student who had undergone his examination best of all, sat in the front row, with a black silk kerchief still bound over his cheek, and was dangling a little silver watch-key that hung over his satin waistcoat. Ikonine, who had been entered last of all, was sitting on the first bench; he wore blue pantaloons, which entirely covered his boots, and was laughing loudly, calling out that he was on Parnassus. Iliinka, who, to my surprise, greeted me not only coldly, but even scornfully, as if to remind me that here all were equals, was sitting just in front of me, with his thin legs on the bench opposite (on purpose to spite me, I thought), and was talking with a fellow-student, every now and then glancing at me. Near me sat Ivin and his friends, all talking French. Every word they said, as far as I could hear, seemed to me utterly devoid of sense, incorrect, not French at all ('Ce n'est pas français,' said I to myself), while the gestures, sayings, and manners of Semenoff, Iliinka, and others seemed to me to be vulgar, common, not *comme il faut*.

I did not belong to any party, and feeling lonely and friendless, was in a bad humour. A student who sat just in front of me was biting his nails, which were all covered with agnails, and I felt so disgusted that I changed my seat. I remember that I felt very sad at heart that day.

When the professor entered, and all took their seats, and all grew quite still, I remember that I turned a satirical glance upon the professor, and was amazed at his beginning his lecture by an incidental sentence which, as I thought, had no sense in it at all. I expected the lecture to be such a clever one from beginning to end, that it should have been impossible to leave out or to add a single word. Disappointed in this, I began to draw in the neatly-bound book I had brought with me, and under the heading 'Lecture the First' drew eighteen profiles, all uniting in a circle like a flower, and only moved my hand along the book every now and then in order that the professor (who, I felt convinced, was very much interested in me) should think that I was writing down what he was saying. Coming to the conclusion, after the first lecture, that it would be both foolish and useless to make notes of what each professor said, I never afterwards swerved from that line of conduct.

I felt less lonely at the next lecture, however, made several new acquaintances, shook hands, talked, yet there was no friendly intercourse between me and my comrades. I could not be on good terms with Ivin and the party denominated the 'aristocrats' because, as I remember, I was unsociable, and even rude, in my bearing towards them, only bowing to them when

they bowed to me, and they seemed to care very little for me. The coldness with which the majority of the students treated me proceeded from a very different cause. As soon as I found that any one of my fellow-students had a liking for me, I would hint that I often dined at Prince Ivan Ivanovitch's, and that I had a barouche of my own. I mentioned it in order to appear under a more favourable aspect—I thought it would make them respect me more ; it always turned out, on the contrary, that any mention of my relationship with Ivan Ivanovitch, or of my having a barouche of my own, inevitably resulted in my comrades growing cold and distant in manner, to my great surprise.

There was a poor student—Operoff—a modest, clever, young fellow, who always shook hands with his fingers stretched out and his hand as motionless as if it were a wooden plank, so that his comrades would often jestingly shake hands with him in the same way, and called it 'giving a plank.' I usually sat near him, and we had many talks together. I liked Operoff for the frankness with which he expressed his liberal opinions concerning the professors. He defined the merits and defects in each letter so clearly and so justly, even made fun of them in his quiet voice in a way that delighted me. Nevertheless, he always carefully took notes of every lecture in his small handwriting. We were beginning to feel quite friendly, agreed to study together, and his little short-sighted eyes beamed with pleasure when I took my seat by his side. But one day I found it necessary to tell him, in the course of conversation, that my

mother on her death-bed had entreated my father never to send us to any public or Government school, that boys brought up in a Government school might be very well informed, but that they were not fit company for me—‘Ce ne sont pas des gens comme il faut,’ added I, hesitating, and feeling myself growing very red. Operoff said nothing, but the next time I came did not wish to be the first to say ‘Good-day,’ did not ‘offer me his plank’ or talk to me, and when I took my seat beside him, looked at his book, as if he were intent upon it. Operoff’s sudden coolness towards me, for which I could discern no reason, surprised me; but I considered it beneath the dignity of a *jeune homme de bonne maison* to try and curry the friendship of a poor student like Operoff, and took no notice of his altered manner, though it grieved me, I must confess. One day I happened to be there before him, and as one of our favourite professors was to read that morning, several students who seldom attended were present, and the seats were all taken; so I sat down in Operoff’s usual place, put my book on the desk before me, and then left my seat for a few moments. When I returned to the auditorium, I found my book had been laid on another desk at the end of the room, and Operoff was in his usual seat. I told him that I had put my book there.

‘I know nothing about it,’ answered he, reddening, and without raising his eyes to mine.

‘But I tell you that I put my book here,’ said I, purposely speaking in an angry tone in order to frighten him as I thought. ‘Everybody saw me do so,’ added I, glancing at the students; but though

many of them looked curiously at me, not one of them uttered a word.

‘The seats are not bought here—the one who comes first sits down,’ said Operoff, settling himself angrily in his seat, and glancing indignantly at me.

‘That proves that you are an ill-bred fellow,’ said I.

I think Operoff muttered something about my being ‘a silly boy,’ but I did not hear exactly what it was. And even if I had, was I to quarrel like a *manant*? I was very fond of the word *manant*; it often answered and solved many puzzling questions. I should, perhaps, have said something to him, nevertheless, if the door had not opened just then, and the professor in his blue coat entered, bowing, and striding up to the desk.

However, when I was in want of notes for the examination, Operoff remembered his promise, offered me his, and proposed that we should study together.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MY LOVE AFFAIRS.

I WAS pretty full of my love affairs during that winter. I was in love three times. First I fell passionately in love with a very stout lady whom I saw riding at Freitag’s riding-school, and therefore I went regularly every Tuesday and Friday (the days on which she rode) to admire her; but I was so afraid of her seeing me that I always stood at some distance, always ran away as soon as she drew near, and turned carelessly

away every time she happened to glance my way, so that I actually never saw her face, and do not know at all if she was handsome or not.

Doubkoff, who was acquainted with her, saw me one day standing behind the lackeys holding their masters' and mistresses' fur cloaks. He had heard about my passion from Dimitri, and put me into such an awful fright by proposing to introduce me to my unknown charmer that I took to my heels, and the idea of his having spoken to her of me effectually deterred me from ever setting foot in the riding-school again, for fear of meeting her there.

Whenever I was in love with any lady whom I did not know, and especially if she were a married woman, I felt a thousand times more shy than I had been with Sonitchka. I feared nothing so much as that the lady with whom I was in love with should have any inkling of the feeling I bore towards her, or should even know that I existed. It seemed to me that if she had suspected my feelings she would have looked upon them as an insult which she could never forgive. And indeed, if the lady I had seen at the riding-school had known how, as I gazed at her from behind the lackeys, I had fancied myself carrying her off by force, living with her in the country, and doing whatever I liked with her, she would have had every right to have felt insulted. I did not realize that her knowing me would not enable her to see into my thoughts, and that there could, therefore, be no harm in my being introduced to her.

Then I fell in love with Sonitchka once more, after meeting her at my sister's. I had already been in

love with her twice, and this was the third time, in consequence of Lubotchka's having shown me a book full of pieces of poetry copied out by Sonitchka, in which several gloomily passionate passages out of Lermontoff's 'Demon' were underlined with red ink, and dried flowers put in to mark the pages. I remembered how, a year ago, Volodja had kissed a purse which a young lady had given him, and I thought I must do the same thing; so, sitting all alone in my room in the evening, I began to think of Sonitchka, looked at the flowers, put them to my lips, and felt a sort of tearful emotion—I was again in love, or, at least, fancied for some days that I was.

Lastly, I fell in love with a young lady who visited at our house, and with whom Volodja was in love too. As far as I can remember, there was nothing attractive about her; at least, none of those qualities which usually attracted me. She was the daughter of a very clever, learned lady, was short, thin, with long auburn curls, and a transparent profile. This young lady was said to be cleverer and more learned than her mother; but of that I had no opportunity of judging, for a feeling of awe at the idea of her cleverness and learning deterred me from speaking to her. I only spoke to her once, and then with fear and trembling. Volodja's enthusiastic praises, which never ceased, no matter who heard him, influenced me to such a degree that I fell passionately in love with her. I never spoke of this to Volodja, for I felt sure he would not like to hear that 'two brothers were in love with the same girl.' What pleased me most was the idea that our love was so pure that

though the object of it was the same lovely being, we should always remain friends, and each would, if necessary, be ready to sacrifice himself for the other. However, I suspect that Volodja did not quite share my feelings as to self-sacrifice. He was so deeply in love that he was once on the point of boxing the ears of a certain diplomatist, and sending a challenge to him on hearing that she was engaged to him. I liked to fancy myself sacrificing my love, perhaps because it was no difficult matter for me to do so, as I had only once spoken to the young lady about the merits of classical music, and in spite of all my endeavours to keep up my flame, it went out completely in a week's time.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE WORLD.

I SOON grew disgusted with the worldly pleasures which I had longed to plunge into, in imitation of my elder brother. Volodja often went to dancing-parties and balls; so did papa with his young wife. I suppose I was still considered too young or too awkward, for nobody ever thought of inviting me. Notwithstanding the promise I had given Dimitri to be perfectly open with him, I never told even him how I longed to go to a ball, or how wounded and vexed I felt at being overlooked, or perhaps being considered too great a philosopher to care for dancing, which I consequently pretended to be.

At last there was to be a party at Princess Kornakoff's that same winter. She called, invited us all,

me too, and I was to go to a ball for the first time. Before setting off, Volodja came into my room to see how I was dressed. His doing so surprised me. I had always thought it a shame to care about being well dressed, but he seemed to consider it a very necessary thing, and told me outright that he had felt afraid that I was going to make a figure of myself. He told me to be sure and put kid boots on, and was horrified at my wanting to wear Swedish gloves ; he made me wear my watch-chain in a queer way, and then took me to a hairdresser's on the Smith's Bridge.* My hair was curled. Volodja placed himself at a little distance from me, and examined my general appearance.

'There, that's not bad ; but cannot you keep that tuft of hair from sticking up?' said he, addressing the hairdresser.

But though Mr. Charles smoothed it down with some sort of sticky stuff, it stuck up again as soon as I put on my hat, and I found that my curled hair made me look uglier than usual. The only thing left me was to put on an air of affected indifference ; it was the only way of making myself look presentable.

Volodja seemed to think so too, for he asked me to brush away the curls, and when I had done so, and did not look any handsomer, he looked at me no more, and was quite cross and silent during the drive to Kornakoff's.

I entered the drawing-room bravely, for Volodja was with me, but when the princess asked me if I danced, I answered that I did not (although, in fact, I

* Principal street in Moscow.

had come for the express purpose of dancing as much as possible), and stood amidst the crowd of strangers, gazing timidly around, and rapidly falling into my usual state of insurmountable, ever-increasing shyness. I stood on the same spot, in silence, almost all the evening.

During a waltz one of the princesses came up to me, and with the studied politeness that characterized the whole family, asked me why I was not dancing. I remember how frightened I felt, but, with a most self-sufficient smile, answered in French, using the most pompous language and talking so nonsensically that even now I cannot recall it to mind without a feeling of shame, though it happened so many, many years ago. I suppose it was the music that had excited my nerves, and I do hope it drowned part of my incomprehensible speech. I said something about high-life, about the futility of mankind, especially women, and at last got into such a confused medley of words that I was obliged to stop short, without finding any possibility of ending the sentence.

The princess looked surprised, and, in spite of her innate good manners, glanced reprovingly at me. At this critical moment Volodja and Doubkoff came up—the former had noticed how excitedly I was talking, and wanted, I suppose, to see whether I was making up for not dancing by talking well. On seeing my smiling face and the puzzled looks of the princess, and on hearing the rhodomontade I uttered in conclusion, he grew very red and walked away. The princess rose likewise and left me. I sat smiling, though I was in agonies at the thought of my silliness,

and felt ready to sink into the ground at my feet, while at the same time a desperate longing to move away, or say something in order to afford some diversion to my feelings, came over me. I went up to Doubkoff, and asked him how many times he had waltzed with 'her.' I flattered myself that I was playful and merry, whilst I was, in reality, applying to Doubkoff for help—to Doubkoff, to whom I had roared out 'Silence' during the dinner-party at Yar's. He pretended he did not hear me, and walked away. I went up to Volodja and tried to say playfully, 'Well, Volodja, thou art tired, art thou not?' But Volodja stared at me, as much as to say, 'Thou dost not speak thus to me when we are alone,' and silently moved away, evidently fearful of my bothering him with my talk.

'My own brother has cast me off,' thought I.

Yet I had not resolution enough to depart. I stood on the same spot till the ball was over, and it was only when the departing guests were crowding in the antechamber, and the lackey, in helping me on with my overcoat, inadvertently caught the brim of my hat, and made it sit awry on my head, that I gave vent to a half-sobbing laugh, and without addressing anyone in particular, said, 'Comme c'est gracieux.'

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A FRANTIC REVEL.

THANKS to the salutary influence of Dimitri, I had never taken part, as yet, in any of the usual amusements of students, called 'orgies,' but I was present at

one that winter, and did not like it. It happened thus :

During one of the lectures, at the beginning of the term, Baron Z., a tall, fair-haired man, with a very grave face and regular features, invited all of us to meet together at his house. By 'all of us' I mean all those of our fellow-students who were *comme il faut*, which, of course, did not include either Grap, Semenoff, Operoff, or any such 'nobodies.'

Volodja smiled disdainfully when he heard that I was going to a 'revel;' but I expected to find it wonderfully pleasant, and punctually at eight o'clock I was at Baron Z.'s. Baron Z., with his coat unbuttoned and in a white waistcoat, received his guests in a brilliantly-lighted hall and drawing-room of a small house, where his parents lived; they had given up their best rooms to him for the occasion. The heads of several inquisitive female servants might be seen peeping out in the passage, and I even caught a glimpse of a lady, whom I took for the baroness herself. There were about twenty of us—all students, with the exception of Mr. Frost, who had come with the Ivins, and a tall, red-faced gentleman, who seemed to act as master of the ceremonies, and who was introduced to each of us as a relation of the baron's, and as a former student of the University of Dorpat. The brilliantly-lighted rooms and the stately elegance of the house seemed at first to cast a chill upon all the youthful assembly, and all sat quite still, with the exception of a few more daring ones and the Dorpat student, who, with his waistcoat unbuttoned, seemed to be everywhere at once, filling the rooms with his pleasant

sonorous tenor. My fellow-students were mostly silent, or talked in whispers about the professors, the examinations, and similar serious and interesting topics. Each of them glanced more than once towards the door of the butler's room, and their faces seemed to say: 'Well, it is time to begin.' I suppose I, too, felt that it was time to begin, and awaited that beginning with joyous impatience.

After tea, when the tea had been handed round, the Dorpat student asked Frost in Russian:

'Dost thou know how to make hot punch, Frost?'

'Oh, yes!' replied Frost, shaking the calves of his legs; but the Dorpat student went on in Russian:

'Well, then, make it.'

Frost began striding backwards and forwards from the drawing-room to the butler's room, and soon a large soup-tureen stood on the table, with a loaf of sugar, weighing about ten pounds, placed over it on three swords laid crossways over the edge of the tureen. In the meantime, Baron Z. went up to the guests, who were all standing gazing at the dish, and said in exactly the same words to each: 'Let us drink a bowl, as a pledge of our mutual brotherhood; I find there is too little unity amongst us students; and pray unbutton your coats, or take them off, as he has done.' And, indeed, the Dorpat student had taken off his coat, tucked up the white sleeves of his shirt above his elbows, and was already lighting the rum in the soup-tureen.

'Gentlemen, put out the light,' exclaimed the Dorpat student in as loud a voice as if we had all been shouting too. But we all stood gazing in silence

at the soup-tureen, and at the white shirt of the Dorpat student—we all felt that the solemn moment was drawing near.

‘Löschen sie die Lichter aus, Frost!’ cried the Dorpat student once more, in German this time, because he was getting excited, I suppose. We all began to extinguish the lights. It was soon quite dark in the room, and the only things visible were the white shirt-sleeves and the hands which upheld the loaf of sugar on the sword over the bluish flame. The loud tenor of the Dorpat student was not the only voice that was heard now; there was a buzz of talking and laughter in every corner of the room. Several of the guests took off their coats (those that had nice clean shirts on, for the most part). I did the same, and felt that ‘it had begun.’ Though I did not feel particularly merry as yet, I was sure that all would be wonderfully pleasant as soon as we had each taken a glass of the beverage.

It was ready at last. The Dorpat student poured it out into tumblers, spilling a good deal on the tablecloth, and shouted: ‘Now, gentlemen!’ When we had each taken one of the sticky tumblers, the Dorpat student and Frost struck up a German song, in which there was a frequent repetition of the exclamation ‘So ho!’ We all joined in the chorus, pledging each other, shouting, extolling the excellence of the beverage, and drinking the sweet, strong liquor with our arms intertwined. Now, there was nothing more to be expected—the revel was at its height. I had already drunk a tumblerful of hot punch, a second was poured out, my temples were throbbing, the

lights seemed dark-red, there was noise and loud laughter around me, yet I did not feel merry in the least, and was even convinced that the others found all this quite as tiresome as I did, and, like myself, only thought it incumbent on them to seem to be enjoying themselves. The Dorpat student was, I think, the only one that really did enjoy himself; he grew redder and redder in the face, was more ubiquitous than ever, filling up the tumblers and spilling the punch all over the table, thereby making it quite sticky. I cannot recall to mind all that went on, but I remember that I loved the Dorpat student passionately that evening, tried to learn one of their German songs by heart, and kissed both him and Frost. I remember that I hated the Dorpat student a little later on, and wanted to throw a chair at his head, but restrained myself. I remember that, besides the same debility in my limbs which I had experienced at Yar's, my head ached so awfully, and I felt so dizzy, that I began to fear I was going to die. I remember, too, that at one time we all sat down on the floor, moving our arms to and fro, as if we were in the act of rowing, and sang: 'Along our own loved Volga,' and that the idea occurred to me that we might have sung it as well without sitting on the floor. I remember myself lying on the floor, kicking and wrestling in a gipsy sort of way, nearly breaking somebody's neck, and thinking that it would not have happened if my antagonist had not been drunk. I remember that we had some supper and wine again, that I went out to cool myself, and felt very cold about the head, and then, on going home, I noticed how very

dark it was, and that the footstep of the cab was slanting and slippery, and that I could not hold on to Kousma, because he was weak, and shook like a reed. I remember that during the whole of that evening I never lost the consciousness that I was acting very foolishly, pretending to be very merry, and to like drinking, and felt quite sure that I was not drunk at all. I felt convinced that all the rest were very foolish, and that the enjoyment was all make-believe. It seemed to me that each of those present disliked the whole business as much as I did, but that each thought himself the only one that experienced so unpleasant a feeling, and therefore considered himself bound to feign merriment, for fear of spoiling the fun for his comrades; besides that, strange to say, I considered it my duty to pretend I was enjoying myself, simply because three bottles of champagne, at ten roubles each, and ten bottles of rum, at four roubles each, had been poured into the soup-tureen, the whole amounting to seventy roubles, without reckoning the cost of the supper. I was so sure that all the others felt precisely as I did in the matter, that I was amazed to find, on attending the lecture the next day, that the students who had been at Baron Z.'s the preceding evening did not seem ashamed of themselves in the least, and talked loudly about the party, as if they wanted the others to hear all about it. They said it had been a famous revel, that the Dorpat student knew how to manage such things, and that forty bottles of rum had been drunk by twenty of us, and that several had been left dead drunk under the table. I could not make out why they said all that, and even added several details that were entirely false.

CHAPTER XL.

MY FRIENDSHIP WITH THE NEKLIUDOFFS.

DURING that winter I often saw not only Dimitri, who was a frequent visitor at our house, but also the whole family of Nekliudoffs, and had begun to be on friendly terms with all of them.

The mother, aunt, and daughter, always spent their evenings at home, and the princess liked young people to come without being specially invited, provided, she used to say, they were people capable of spending an evening without card-playing or dancing. It seems such young men were rather rare, for, though I spent almost every evening at their house, I seldom found any other visitor there. I had grown used to the family, to their different dispositions, had a clearer insight into the terms on which they stood towards each other, had become accustomed even to the rooms and the furniture, and, when there were no visitors, felt quite at home there—except when I chanced to be left alone with Varinka. I fancied that, as she was by no means a pretty girl, she would have been greatly flattered by my falling in love with her. However, in time, I began to feel at my ease with her too. She talked to me as simply and frankly as she did to her brother, or to Liubov Sergeievna, so that I at last grew into the habit of considering her simply as a fellow-creature, and ceased to find it either embarrassing or dangerous to show frankly that I found a pleasure in her society. During all the time of our acquaintance I hardly ever found her alike two days

running ; sometimes I would find her looking very ugly, at other times rather good-looking, but it never once came into my head to ask myself whether I was in love with her or not. I used to talk to her every now and then, but would more often address my discourse to Lioubov Sergeievna, or to Dimitri, instead. I preferred that way of talking to her. I liked her to listen to my talk ; I liked to hear her sing, and to feel her presence in the room ; but any thought of what our future relations to each other might be, seldom occurred to me. If any such thoughts did arise I unconsciously strove to banish them, feeling perfectly satisfied with the present.

But, in spite of the friendly terms on which we stood, I considered it incumbent upon me to conceal my true feelings and tastes from all the family, and especially from Varinka. I tried to seem very different to what I really was. I wanted to be thought enthusiastic, used to fall into ecstasies and utter sundry exclamations of delight ; fell into enthusiastic attitudes whenever I wanted people to think that anything pleased me, and at the same time strove to seem perfectly indifferent to anything really extraordinary that I chanced to see or hear. I tried to seem an ill-natured critic, who spared nothing and nobody, and at the same time wanted to be thought a keen observer. I wanted to appear logical in all I did, punctilious and cautious, and at the same time pretended to disdain all that was of earth earthy. I make bold to say that I was a much better man in reality than that strange being I made myself out to be. However, the Neklioudoffs all grew fond of me, even

such as I appeared to them, and, luckily for me, saw through my pretence. I think Liubov Sergeievna was the only one who disliked me, for she considered me a great egotist, a heathen, and a scoffer; she would begin some argument with me, become quite excited, and defeat me by her abrupt, incoherent sayings. Dimitri still continued to be on the same strange terms with her—something closer than mere friendship—and used to say that nobody appreciated her worth, and that she had done him a world of good. Their friendship was a cause of great grief to the whole family.

One day Varinka, talking about that incomprehensible friendship to me, explained it thus :

‘Dimitri is full of self-love. He is very proud, and, in spite of his cleverness, likes to be praised and made much of. He likes to stand high in the estimation of others; and “auntie,” in her simplicity, admires him greatly, and has not sufficient tact to conceal her admiration, and so she flatters him unintentionally.’

I was struck by her reasoning, and on thinking it over afterwards I could not help coming to the conclusion that Varinka was very clever, and, in consequence, awarded her a higher place in my esteem. She rose higher and higher in my opinion as I gradually discovered how clever and how full of noble qualities she was; but though I was pleased to find her such, my feelings for her never went beyond the bounds of moderation, and never reached a pitch of enthusiasm. Thus, when Sophia Ivanovna, who was never weary of talking about her niece, once told me

that when Varinka was a child of four, she had once given away her dresses and shoes to some poor peasants' children without asking anybody's leave to do so, and that her parents had been obliged to send and take them back, I did not consider it a praiseworthy deed, but rather thought such conduct showed a want of common-sense worthy of ridicule.

When the Neklioudoffs had visitors, and amongst others Volodja and Doubkoff, I would remain in the background, with a calm consciousness of being one of the family, talking but little, and preferring to listen to the conversation of the others. But all their conversation seemed to me to be so very silly, and I wondered how a clever, sensible woman like the princess, and her clever family could bear to listen to such nonsense, and even find anything to say in reply. If it had ever occurred to me to compare what the others said with what I often said myself when we were alone, I should have wondered less. I should have been less surprised if I had reflected that our own family circle—Avdotja Vassilievna, Lubotchka, and Katenka—were not sillier than the majority of people, and had remembered the talk that went on there, during whole evenings, between Doubkoff, Avdotja Vassilievna, and Katenka, how the former never lost an opportunity of declaiming, 'Au banquet de la vie, infortuné convive,' or some fragment from 'The Demon,' and the nonsense they would often talk for hours.

Varenka naturally took much less notice of me when other visitors were present, and we had none of the reading and music that I liked so much.

When she was conversing with any visitor she always lost her greatest charm in my eyes, *i.e.*, her calm good-sense and simplicity. I remember how strange it seemed to me to hear her talking about the theatre and the weather with my brother Volodja. I knew that he heartily disliked and despised idle chit-chat ; Katenka, too, had often laughed at affected talk about the weather, etc.—how was it, then, that whenever they met they never had any but the most trite commonplace conversation together, looking quite ashamed of themselves all the time? After any conversation of that kind I always chafed inwardly against Varinka, made fun of the departed guests the next day, but found it pleasanter than ever to be alone again in the family circle of the Neklioudoffs.

I now began to find more pleasure in Dimitri's company when we were in his mother's drawing-room than when we were alone.

CHAPTER XLI.

MY FRIENDSHIP WITH DIMITRI NEKLILOUDOFF.

AT that time my friendship with Dimitri hung on a thread. I had begun, long ago, to watch him too closely not to have found sundry defects in him, and in early youth we love passionately and expect the loved one to be perfect. When the haze of passion is dissipated by degrees, however, or when the bright rays of reason pierce through it, and we see the object of our love such as he really is, with his virtues and his defects, the latter alone, being un-

expected, strike us vividly ; we exaggerate them, and a longing for something new, a hope that perfection is not an impossibility, that we may find it yet in another, leads, not only to coldness, but to a feeling almost of dislike for our best-loved friend, and we cast him off without any regret, and start off in search of some more perfect being. If such were not precisely the case in this instance, it was owing to Dimitri's sturdy, pedantic, sensible, rather than fervent attachment, which I felt ashamed to cast off. Another bond of unity between us was our strange compact of mutual frankness. We were both afraid of leaving in each other's power the knowledge of all the secret thoughts we had confided to each other, and which we were heartily ashamed of. However, our compact of mutual frankness had long ceased to be followed out, as we both saw clearly, and now only served to make us feel strangely uncomfortable.

Whenever I came to see Dimitri that winter I was sure to meet there a fellow-student of his, a certain Besobiedoff, with whom he used to study. Besobiedoff was a little wiry, pock-marked man, with small, freckled hands, and an immense head of matted, un-combed hair ; he was dirty, ragged, ill-bred, and not even a hard worker. The friendship Dimitri bore him seemed as incomprehensible to me as was the friendship between the former and Liubov Sergeievna. The only reason that could have prompted Dimitri to choose him out from amidst all his other comrades, and strike up a friendship with him must have been that there was not an uglier-looking fellow in the whole university. I suppose that was the reason why

Dimitri chose to stand his friend. All his intercourse with Besobiedoff betrayed but one feeling: 'Well, now, you see I do not care a straw who you are—we are all equals. I like the fellow, and that is sufficient proof that there is good in him.'

I wondered how he could bear to force his inclinations in that way, and how that miserable Besobiedoff did not get sick of being in such an awkward position. It was a friendship that displeased me greatly.

One day I called upon Dimitri, intending to spend the evening in his mother's drawing-room, hearing Varinka read or sing; but Besobiedoff was upstairs, and Dimitri replied, rather sharply, that he could not go down to the drawing-room because, as I could see for myself, he had a visitor in his room

'There is nothing peculiarly amusing there,' added he. 'Let us stay here and have a chat.' Though the idea of spending an hour or two with Besobiedoff was far from being an amusing one, not liking to enter the drawing-room alone, and greatly vexed at my friend's odd taste, I sat down in the rocking-chair and began rocking myself in silence. I felt very cross with Dimitri and Besobiedoff for depriving me of the pleasure of going downstairs; I waited with the utmost impatience for Besobiedoff's departure, and sat listening to their conversation in silent vexation. 'A fine visitor, truly! Nice company he is!' thought I, when the servant, having brought in tea, Dimitri was obliged to ask Besobiedoff four or five times to take a glass, the shy guest seeming to think it incumbent on him to refuse at first, adding, 'Pray take it yourself.' Dimitri, evidently with an effort, kept up a

conversation with his guest, and tried to draw me into it, but in vain. I sat there in moody silence.

‘Well, I suppose nobody would dare even to suspect me of feeling dull in such fine company,’ said I to myself, mentally addressing Dimitri, and still rocking myself to and fro. It was with a kind of pleasurable sensation that I endeavoured to kindle in my breast a feeling of hatred towards my friend. ‘What a fool he is!’ thought I; ‘he might have spent a pleasant evening downstairs, and there he sits with that beastly fellow, and it will soon be too late for us to go into the drawing-room,’ and I glanced over the edge of the rocking-chair at my friend. His hand, his attitude, his neck, and especially the back of his head and his knees, provoked me to such a degree that I would have willingly done anything I could to vex him—the more disagreeable it might be for him the better.

At last Besobiedoff rose to go, but Dimitri could not easily be induced to part with such an agreeable guest, and asked him to pass the night at his house, which, however, Besobiedoff declined to do, and departed at last.

After having seen him off Dimitri returned, with a self-satisfied smile on his lips, and began pacing up and down the room, rubbing his hands together, partly with pleasure at not having yielded to my request, I suppose, and partly because he had, at last, got rid of his tiresome guest. Every now and then he glanced at me. I hated him more than ever. ‘How dare he go on smiling in that way?’ said I to myself.

‘Why art thou in such a rage?’ said he, suddenly stopping short opposite me.

‘I am not in a rage at all,’ answered I, as people usually do answer in such cases. ‘It vexes me to see thee dissemble before me, and before Besobiedoff, and cheat thy own self.’

‘Nonsense! I never dissemble.’

‘I have not forgotten our compact, and speak openly to thee. I am quite sure,’ added I, ‘that thou findest Besobiedoff a bore, as I do, because he is a fool, and all that sort of thing; but thou likest to give thyself airs by patronizing him.’

‘I do not. In the first place, Besobiedoff is a very good sort of fellow.’

‘And I say thou dost. Nay, I tell thee that thy friendship for Lioubov Sergeievna is likewise based on the consciousness that thou art a god in her eyes.’

‘I tell thee it is not so.’

‘And I tell thee it is! I know by my own experience,’ answered I eagerly, curbing my vexation, and hoping to disarm him by my frankness. ‘I tell thee over and over again that we always fancy we love those that say agreeable things to us, but if we examine the matter closely we see that it is no true attachment.’

‘No,’ said Dimitri, angrily settling his necktie, ‘neither praise nor blame can influence me when I love.’

‘That is not true. I confessed to thee once, that when papa called me a horrid fellow one day, I hated him for some time after, and wished he was dead, and thou——’

‘Speak for thyself; I am sorry to find thee such a——’

‘On the contrary,’ cried I, rising hastily and looking fixedly at him with desperate courage, ‘it is very wrong of thee to say so. What didst thou tell me about thy brother? I shall not repeat it—it would be dishonourable of me to do so—but didst not thou tell me? . . . and I say that I know thee now for what thou really art!’

Trying to wound his feelings worse than he had wounded mine, I endeavoured to prove to him that he loved nobody, and heaped upon him all the reproaches I thought he deserved. I was glad to have spoken out at last, entirely forgetting that the only purpose I could have in view in doing so—viz., to make him confess himself in the wrong—could not be attained at a moment when he was excited and angry. In calmer moments he might have confessed it, but at such times I never spoke to him about it.

Our argument was verging into a quarrel when Dimitri suddenly grew quite still and went into the next room. I followed him, still talking, but he made no answer. I knew that his besetting sin was a hasty temper, and that he was now trying to overcome it. I inwardly cursed all the rules he had laid down for himself.

So this was to what our compact—*always to tell each other all we felt, and never to speak of each other to any third person*—had brought us. Under the impulse of being perfectly open, we had indulged in the most shameless confidences, and, to our shame, taken sup-

positions for wishes, and fancies for feelings, as in the instance I have just mentioned in the course of our conversation. Not only did these confidences not tend to strengthen the bond between us, they drew us further apart. And now pride withheld him from making the most trifling avowal, and in the heat of our argument we both made use of the weapons we had ourselves given each other, and which left deep wounds in the minds of both.

CHAPTER XLII.

OUR STEPMOTHER.

PAPA had intended to come to Moscow with his wife, after New Year's Day, but he unexpectedly arrived in the autumn, in October, just when the hunting-season was at its height. He said he had altered his mind, because a lawsuit of his was to be brought before the Senate about that time, but Mimi told us that Avdotja Vassilievna had found living in the country so tedious, had so often talked about going to Moscow, and even feigned sickness, that papa had at last resolved to gratify her by setting off earlier. 'Avdotja Vassilievna never loved him, but only dinned it in everybody's ears that she did because she had set her heart on marrying a rich man,' added Mimi with a pensive sigh, which seemed to say, '*some people* would not have acted thus if he had been capable of appreciating them.'

Some people were unjust towards Avdotja Vassilievna. Her passionate devotion to papa was evident

in every word, look, and gesture. Yet her love and the wish never to leave her husband's side did not in the least prevent her from longing for a fine cap from Madame Annette's, for a bonnet with some wonderful blue ostrich feather in it, or a gown of blue Venetian velvet, which would set off her white neck and arms to advantage, which had never yet been seen by anyone except her husband and her maid. Of course Katenka thought just as her mother did. As to us, we fell into strange jesting terms from the very first day of their arrival. As soon as she had got out of the carriage Volodja went gravely up to her, made a low bow, and, kissing her hand, said :

‘ I have the honour to congratulate my dear mamma, and to kiss her hand.’

‘ Ah, my dear *little* son !’ said Avdotja Vassilievna, with her pretty, meaningless smile.

‘ Pray do not overlook your second son,’ said I, kissing her hand too and unwittingly imitating Volodja's manner and voice.

If we and our stepmother had been sure of each other's feelings, that style of greeting might have meant that we simply disliked all useless terms of endearment ; if we had disliked each other, it might have been taken for irony, a disinclination to appear hypocritical, or, again, for a desire to conceal our feelings from our father, and so on ; but in the present instance it meant nothing at all, and only covered an entire absence of all feeling. In after-years I have often noticed similar jesting and unnatural terms to exist between the members of some family when they feel that those terms are not quite friendly ones. And

such were the relations between us and Avdotja Vassilievna. They never varied ; we were always most polite to her, spoke French, bowed and scraped, calling her '*chère maman*,' and she always answered in the same half-jesting way, with the same uniform smile. It was only that cry-baby Lubotchka, with her ugly feet and silly talk, who loved our stepmother, and would sometimes naïvely and awkwardly try to engender more friendly feelings in us. She was the only being that Avdotja Vassilievna cared for with the exception of papa, of course, whom she loved passionately. Avdotja Vassilievna even treated Lubotchka with a shy respect that surprised me.

At first, Avdotja Vassilievna would often call herself our stepmother, and would hint that a stepmother was always unjustly disliked by the whole household, and that consequently her position was not an easy one. But though she foresaw all the disagreeables her position entailed, she did nothing to avoid them. She might have said a kind word to one, made a little present to another, perhaps might have avoided grumbling—it would not even have cost her an effort, for she was kind and good-tempered by nature. Instead of doing so, seeing what the difficulties of her position might be, she stood on the defensive before she was attacked, and supposing that the whole household wanted to wound her feelings and insult her, suspected each of having some design against her ; moreover, thinking it very dignified to bear all in silence, she made no effort to gain anybody's affection, and was consequently disliked. She was, besides, utterly devoid of that intuitive intelligence which I

have already spoken of as being greatly developed amongst us, and her habits were so entirely at variance with those of all the family that it sufficed to set us against her. She lived in our neat, orderly home as if she were a new arrival. She would get up at irregular hours, would sometimes come down to dinner ; at other times she would remain in her room ; one evening she would have supper, another evening she would go without. Except when visitors were present she was always only half dressed, and was not ashamed of appearing before us or the servants in a white petticoat, a shawl thrown over her shoulders, and her arms bare. I was pleased at first to find her so simple in her manners ; but soon that very simplicity eradicated the last vestiges of respect. What amazed us most of all was that she seemed quite another being when strangers were present ; in the presence of visitors she was a young, cold beauty, full of health, very well-dressed, neither very clever nor very witty, but always cheerful. When we were alone you saw only a middle-aged, weary, careworn woman, slatternly and bored, in spite of the smile on her lips. When I used to see her return after calling upon some friends, her cheeks flushed from the cold, happy in the consciousness of her beauty, and casting her beautiful but never-varying smile on all around, or rustling along towards the carriage in her ball dress, her neck and arms bare, looking both shy and proud ; or, again, at some evening party at home, in her high silk dress, with delicate lace round her white neck, I would wonder what those who admired her then would say if they saw her such as I often saw her at home, when

no strangers were present, when, waiting for her husband's return from his club after midnight, she would wander like a ghost up and down the dimly-lighted rooms. At such times she would go up to the piano and play the only waltz she knew, or she would take up a novel, read a few lines, then throw it aside; or else she would go to the pantry herself instead of sending a servant, would get a cucumber and a bit of cold veal, and eat them, standing by the pantry window, then wander listlessly from room to room again. But nothing caused us gradually to drift asunder more and more as much as her utter want of comprehension, betrayed by a peculiar air of condescending attention which she put on when the conversation turned on subjects she could not understand. It was no fault of hers that she had unconsciously fallen into the habit of smiling slightly and inclining her head when the conversation was uninteresting (she took interest in nothing except in papa and herself); but that oft-repeated smile and inclination of the head were intolerably repulsive. Her cheerfulness, which seemed to lie in turning herself, us, and everybody else into ridicule, did not communicate itself to anybody else; her sensibility was lackadaisical. But what provoked me most of all was that she was continually talking about her love for my father. It was no falsehood that she told when she said that her whole life was absorbed in her love for her husband, though she proved it to be so till her death, but I found such constant reiteration of the fact revolting; we were more ashamed of her when she spoke of her affection in the presence of strangers than we were of her bad French.

She did love her husband devotedly, and her husband loved her, especially during the first years of their marriage, when he saw that he was not the only one who admired her. Her only aim in life was the preservation of her husband's love, yet she seemed purposely to do whatever he disliked—just in order to demonstrate her love and devotion.

She liked dress, and father liked her to look her best, so as to excite admiration in society ; she gave up her liking for finery, for father's sake, and began to get more and more into the way of sitting at home in her gray morning-gown. Papa had always considered freedom and unconstraint as being essential conditions of family happiness, and had hoped that his pet daughter, Lubotchka, and his kind, young wife would be good friends ; but Avdotja Vassilievna again made a victim of herself, and found it incumbent on her to show 'the real mistress of the house,' as she called Lubotchka, a respect which was not her due, and which wounded papa's feelings bitterly. He often played cards that winter, and towards the end of the season lost a good deal. As he did not want his home circle to have anything to do with his gains or losses at cards he never spoke of them. Avdotja Vassilievna made a victim of herself again, and though she was not quite well just then, she thought it her duty to sit up, in her gray dressing-gown, till four or five o'clock in the morning, and when he returned from his club, tired out, cross, and ashamed of having had an eighth fine to pay,* would

* A fine has to be paid in Russia for staying at the club after twelve o'clock at night ; for every half-hour after the allotted time the fine is doubled.

come waddling up to meet him. She would ask him, in an absent sort of way, if he had been lucky, and would listen with a smile of condescending attention and a slight shake of the head when he told her what he had done at the club, and repeated for the hundredth time that he entreated her never to sit up for him. And though papa's winning or losing at cards (though, by the way he played, our whole fortune was at stake) did not interest her in the least, she continued to sit up for him every night, and was the first to meet him when he came home. She was prompted to act thus, not only by her passion for making a victim of herself, but also by a secret feeling of jealousy, which caused her the greatest torture. Nothing in the world could ever have convinced her that papa returned so late from the club, and not from some mistress's house. She tried to read his love secrets in his face, and seeing nothing there, she would sigh as if enjoying her grief, and give herself up to the contemplation of her misery.

In consequence of this, and sundry other instances of her always considering herself a victim, towards the close of the winter, during which papa had lost considerable sums, and was consequently out of sorts, a kind of intermittent feeling of calm dislike began to be noticeable in his treatment of his wife—that restrained dislike for the once-loved being which betrays itself by an unconscious desire to say something disagreeable to him or her.

CHAPTER XLIII.

MY NEW COMRADES.

THE winter passed imperceptibly, and it was already beginning to thaw. A list of the days on which the examinations were to take place had already been stuck up on the walls of the university, when it suddenly occurred to me that I should soon have to go up for examination on eighteen different subjects, on which I had attended lectures, but had heard nothing, had taken down no notes, and was unprepared to answer a single question. Strange to say, such a simple question as 'How am I to undergo my examination?' had never once entered my mind. The fact is, I had been in such a haze all that winter, so full of delight at being a grown-up man, and so *comme il faut*, that when the idea did cross my mind as to how I should undergo my examination, I would draw a comparison between my fellow-students and myself, and say to myself, 'They will manage to do so, though they are not *comme il faut*; as I am better than they are, I must pass.' I only attended the lectures because I had got into the habit of doing so, and because papa would not let me stay at home. Besides, I had many acquaintances there; I found it pleasant. I liked the noise, the talk, the laughter in the auditorium; liked to sit on one of the seats at the back during a lecture, without heeding the measured tones of the professor's voice, and to give the reins to my fancy or watch my comrades; I liked to run over to Mattern's with one or other of them, to take a

glass of brandy and a snack, knowing we should catch it if seen, and sneak back into the auditorium to hear the professor again, gently closing the door after us. I liked to join in the fun, when all assembled in the corridor after the lecture. That was all very pleasant.

Just as all had begun to attend very regularly, the professor of physics ended his lectures, and took leave of us till the examination. The students then began to study together, in separate groups, and I reflected that it was time for me to set to work too. As I have already said, Operoff and I were not on friendly terms, and merely bowed coldly to each other whenever we met; now, however, he not only offered to lend me his manuscripts, but invited me to prepare for my examination together with him and several other students. I thanked him and accepted his proposal, hoping that the honour I thus did him would effectually put an end to the coolness that had existed between us. I proposed that they should all come to study at my house, as I had a nice lodging.

The answer was that they would study at the house of each, in turn, preferring those that lived nearer. We first assembled at Zoukin's. He had a small room; behind a partition wall, in a large house on the Troubnoi Boulevard. I was rather late on the appointed day, and the reading had already begun. The room was full of the smoke of 'mahorca.*' On the table there stood a bottle of brandy, a wineglass, some bread and salt, and a leg of mutton.

Zoukin, without rising from his chair, asked me to drink a glass of brandy and to take off my coat.

* A sort of tobacco of inferior quality.

‘I suppose you are not used to such fare?’ added he.

All the students wore cotton-print shirts with fronts. With an effort to conceal my disgust I took off my coat and threw myself down unceremoniously on to the sofa. Zoukin went on reading, referring to his notes every now and then, and when there was anything the others did not answer, giving brief, clear, and accurate explanations. I began to listen more attentively, but there were many things I could not understand, and I stopped the reading to ask.

‘Oh, my dear fellow, it’s of no use your listening if you do not know that,’ said Zoukin. ‘I’ll lend you my manuscripts, and you can look them over by to-morrow. What’s the use of stopping to explain such a thing as that . . .?’

I felt ashamed of my ignorance, but seeing, at the same time, that Zoukin’s remark was just, left off listening, and began to examine my comrades instead. Taken according to my subdivision of people into *comme il faut* and *not comme il faut*, they certainly belonged to the second category, and therefore excited, not only my scorn, but a feeling of personal dislike, because, without being *comme il faut*, they seemed to consider themselves my equals, and even benevolently patronized me. Those feelings were heightened by their legs, by their dirty hands, with the nails bitten down to the skin, by the long nail on Operoff’s little finger, by their pink shirts, by the abusive terms they playfully addressed to each other, by the dirty room, and the habit Zoukin had of blowing his nose incessantly, pressing his finger

against his nostril, and especially by the way they spoke, using bookish terms, and accenting the syllables incorrectly.

Yet, though there was much that was repulsive to me, in their outward appearance, I was forced to confess to myself that there was a great deal of good in all these young men, and I envied their cheerful unity, and should have liked to be on more friendly terms with them. I was already well acquainted with good-tempered, honest Operoff, and now began to like that sturdy, wonderfully clever Zoukin, who was evidently quite an authority in the little circle. He was a short, stoutly-built, dark-complexioned man, with a flabby, shining, but very clever, independent, and animated physiognomy. It was especially his low but rounded forehead, overshadowing his black eyes, his short bushy hair and his thick black beard, always looking as if it had not been shaved, which gave him that look. He did not seem ever to be thinking of himself (a trait I liked to see in people), but it was evident his mind was always at work. He had one of those expressive faces which seem to alter completely when you have seen them a few hours. At least it was the case with Zoukin's face. Towards the close of the evening I began to notice wrinkles I had not noticed before ; his eyes seemed more sunken, his smile was no longer the same, and his whole face seemed so changed that I could hardly believe it was the same.

After the reading Zoukin, several other students, and myself drank off a glass of brandy each, as a sign of good fellowship, and the bottle was nearly empty. Zoukin asked if any of us had a twenty-five

copeck-piece, in order to send an old woman, who acted as his servant, to fetch another bottle of brandy. I offered to give the money, but Zoukin, without heeding me, turned to Operoff, who drew the required sum from a netted bead-purse.

‘Mind thou dost not get into one of thy tipping fits again,’ said Operoff, who never drank anything himself.

‘Never fear,’ answered Zoukin, sucking the marrow out of the mutton-bone, and smiling—his smile was one you could not help noticing, and feeling grateful for. ‘If I do begin to drink hard, there will be no harm done, brother ; we’ll see whether the fumes of brandy will get the better of me, or I of them,’ added he, rapping his forehead boastfully ; ‘but I am afraid Semenoff will break down—how he does drink!’

And, indeed, that same Semenoff, with the gray hair, who, to my great satisfaction, had looked so much uglier even than myself at our first examination, and who passed second best, had attended the lectures very regularly during the first month, had taken to drink some time before the first quarterly repetition, and had never since made his appearance at the university.

‘Where is he?’ inquired one of the students.

‘I have quite lost sight of him,’ said Zoukin ; ‘the last time I saw him was when we broke Lisbon Hotel down together. That was a grand affair! He got into a mess after that I heard. . . . What a head that fellow has! There’s energy for you, and what a clever fellow he is! It will be a pity if he goes to the dogs—and he will, that’s as sure as day ; he is not one to get on at the university, a fellow like that!’

After a little more talk, we all took leave of each other, after having settled that we were to meet again at Zoukin's the next day, as he lived nearer. When we had all come out into the courtyard, I felt somewhat ashamed to drive off, whilst all the rest had to walk home, and bashfully offered Operoff a seat in my gig. Zoukin came out, too, and having borrowed a rouble off Operoff, went to spend the night somewhere. As we drove along the streets Operoff talked a good deal about Zoukin, his disposition, the life he led, etc. ; and on my return home I lay awake for a long time, my thoughts full of the new acquaintances I had made. And as I lay, I hesitated between the esteem which their cleverness, simplicity of manner, and all the poetry of their youth and dashing boldness excited in me on the one hand, and the disgust I felt for their ungentle appearance on the other. However much I might wish to be on friendly terms with them, I felt that it was utterly impossible. Our tastes and opinions were too much at variance. There were so many trifles, in which lay all the charm, all the chief aims of my life, in my eyes, which were perfectly incomprehensible for them. But the principal reason why no friendship could subsist between us was that my coat was made of cloth, which cost thirty-seven roubles per yard, that I had a gig of my own, and wore shirts made of fine Holland linen. I considered all these as important items ; it seemed to me that they could not but consider all these signs of wealth almost in the light of so many insults. I felt myself in the wrong, and humiliated ; then, again, was vexed with myself for such useless humility, after which, falling

into the opposite extreme, could not by any means get into simple, straightforward fellowship with them. The coarse and vicious sides of Zoukin's disposition were at that time so entirely thrown into the shade by the charm of his bold, dashing manner in my eyes, that they did not impress me disagreeably.

For about a fortnight I went to Zoukin's every evening. I did not study much, because, as I have said already, I was behind them in my studies, and as I had not sufficient energy to work alone, so as to catch up with them, I only pretended to listen and to understand. I rather suspect that my comrades guessed how it was with me, for I noticed that they often skipped over what they all knew, and that they never asked me.

By degrees I grew more and more indulgent to the ungentle manners of that little circle, found their way of life, which had a certain poetical charm in it for me, more and more interesting. The promise I had made Dimitri, never to take part in their orgies, alone restrained me from sharing them.

One day, wishing to let them see how well read I was in literature, especially in French literature, I turned the conversation upon it. To my great surprise, I found that, though they pronounced the titles of the French works with a Russian accent, they had read more than I had, were well acquainted with the works of all the best English and Spanish authors, and that they had all read *Le Sage*, whom I had never even heard of. Pushkin's and Joukovsky's works were literary works in their eyes, not merely books in a yellow binding to be studied in childhood, as they were in mine. They spoke slightly of

Dumas, Sue, and Féval, and I was soon obliged to own to myself that their judgment was much sounder than my own, especially that of Zoukin. Still more amazed was I to discover that Operoff played the violin, that another of the students played the violoncello and the piano too, and that both of them formed part of the university orchestra, were really good musicians, and could appreciate good music. In a word, they knew everything I had expected to astound them by a good deal better than I did myself, with the exception of the correct pronunciation of the French and German languages, nor did they seem to think there was anything to be proud of in that. I might have boasted of being a man of the world, but that I was not; then, what was it that made me look down upon them? My acquaintance with Prince Ivan Ivanovitch? My correct pronunciation of the French language? My having my own equipage? My linen shirts? My nails? But is not all that nonsense, after all? thought I sometimes with a feeling of envy at the sight of the good-fellowship and the kind-hearted, youthful merriment around me. They all said 'thou' to each other. The simplicity of their manners towards each other almost amounted to rudeness at times; but under that rough exterior there always lay a delicacy which made them avoid saying anything that could wound each other's feelings; the expressions, 'thou rascal,' 'thou jeig,' used as terms of endearment, struck me disagreeably. I found them ridiculous, but they were never considered as insulting by those to whom they were addressed, and did not in the least prevent them from being on a most friendly footing. They were as

careful of each other's feelings, as delicate, as only very young and very poor men are. But what attracted me most of all was, that I instinctively felt that there was something wild, dissolute, and dashing in Zoukin and his adventures in Lisbon Hotel. I felt very sure that those revels were very different to that sober piece of pretence with the hot punch and champagne that I had taken part in at Baron Z.'s house.

CHAPTER XLIV.

ZOUKIN AND SEMENOFF.

I HAVE no idea what class of society Zoukin belonged to; I only know that he was educated at the gymnasium of S——, was poor, and, I think, not of noble birth. He was then about eighteen, though he looked much older. He was wonderfully clever, and very intelligent; it was easier for him to embrace at once the full meaning of some intricate subject, seeing all the details and deductions at first sight, than to reason upon the laws which led to these same deductions. He knew he was clever, prided himself upon it, but was always perfectly unaffected and kind in his manners. He must have had a great deal to bear in the course of his life. His ardent, receptive disposition had already taken in love, friendship, business, and money. Though on a small scale, amidst the lower classes of society, there was nothing he had not tried, nothing that he did not look upon either with disdain or indifference, proceeding from the too great facility with which he had attained it. It seemed as if he undertook anything new so eagerly, only to despise

it as soon as he had attained his purpose; and his great abilities always did enable him to attain his purpose easily, thus giving him the right to despise it. It was thus with every science; he studied little, never took notes, yet knew mathematics remarkably well, and his saying that he could puzzle the professor himself was no vain boast. He found that there was a great deal of useless nonsense in the lectures, yet, with the unconscious cunning inherent in him, he always managed to say just what the professors expected him to say, and they all liked him. He was very straightforward in his dealings with all those who were in authority over him, yet they all esteemed him. Not only did he feel neither respect nor fondness for science, but actually despised those who studied hard at what came so very easily to him. Science, as he understood it, did not require a tenth of his abilities; his student's career offered nothing that could satisfy him, and his ardent, restless disposition, he used to say, wanted 'life'; that is why he gave himself up to frantic revelry of all kinds, as often as his small means would allow, with the greatest zest, hoping to put an end to his life by living as hard as he could. All happened just as Operoff had predicted. He disappeared a week or two before the examination, so that we had to meet at the house of another of the students for our reading. On the day appointed for the first examination, however, he made his appearance, looking pale and weak, his hands trembling, and underwent his examination brilliantly.

At the beginning of the year there had been about eight students in the group of habitual revellers, at the head of which stood Zoukin. Two of them had

been Ikonine and Semenoff, but the former soon retired, being unable to continue the wild revelry ; the latter left, on the contrary, because he found they were not wild enough. At first we had all looked at them with a kind of awe, often talking of all their wild doings.

The chief heroes were Zoukin, and afterwards Semenoff. We all really dreaded Semenoff, and when he used to enter the lecture-room, a thing he very rarely did, there was great excitement in the auditorium.

Semenoff ended his wild career in a queer way just a few days before the examination. I was present at the time, at Zoukin's house. It happened thus : one evening we were all assembled at Zoukin's, and Operoff was leaning over his manuscripts, a tallow-candle in a candlestick on one side of him, and a second tallow-candle stuck into a bottle on the other, and just beginning to read in his weak, cracked voice, his closely-written notes on physics, when the landlady entered the room, saying that somebody was asking for Semenoff, and had brought a note. . . .

CHAPTER XLV.

I BREAK DOWN AT THE EXAMINATION.

AT last came the day appointed for our first examination on differentials and integrals. I was still in a maze, and did not seem clearly to comprehend what awaited me. In the evenings, on leaving Zoukin and my other comrades, the idea had often occurred to me that many of my convictions ought to be altered,

that there was something wrong about them ; but in the mornings I was always my own *comme il faut* self again, perfectly self-satisfied, and seeing no need of any change.

It was in such a state of mind that I went up for my first examination. I took my seat in that part of the room where the sons of princes, counts and barons sat, entered into conversation with them in French, and, strange to say, it never came into my head that I should immediately be called up to answer questions on a subject that I knew nothing about. I looked on coolly as I saw the others go up one after the other, and even made fun of some of them.

‘ Well, Grap,’ said I to Iliinka, as he was returning to his seat, ‘ you were in a terrible fright, I suppose ?’

‘ We shall see how it will be with you,’ said Iliinka, who, ever since he had entered the university, had rebelled against my influence entirely, would never smile when I spoke to him, and evidently disliked me.

I smiled scornfully in answer, though the doubt Iliinka’s words conveyed gave me a slight twinge. But the feeling was short-lived, and I grew absent and indifferent once more, and even promised Baron Z. that, as soon as my examination was over (as if it were the veriest trifle), I would go over to Mattern’s with him to have lunch. When I was called up, together with Ikonine, I smoothed down the skirts of my uniform and walked coolly up to the table.

A slight tremor ran through me, however, when a young professor—the very one who had examined me when I first entered the university—looked me full in

the face, and then pointed to some paper tickets, on which stood sundry questions. Ikonine took a ticket, swaying his body backwards and forwards just as he had done at the last year's examination, and answered, though very badly, while I did just what he had done at the last year's examination—nay, I did even worse, for I took up a second ticket, and could not answer the question on that one either. The professor cast a glance of pity at me, and said calmly, but in a very decided tone :

‘You cannot pass, Mr. Irtenjeff. You need not continue your examination. Nor you either, Mr. Ikonine,’ added he.

Ikonine begged hard to be allowed to undergo his examination over again, but the professor replied that he could not possibly do in two days what he had left undone in the course of the whole year, and that he could not pass by any means. Ikonine continued begging and entreating very humbly, but received a second refusal.

‘You may go, gentlemen,’ said the professor at last, in the same low, firm voice.

It was only when he uttered these words that I moved away, and I felt ashamed to think that by standing there in silence I had seemed to take part in the degrading supplications of Ikonine. I do not remember how I crossed the hall, what answers I gave my comrades, how I came out into the entrance-hall, or how I reached home. I felt insulted, humiliated, and most miserable.

For three days I did not leave my room, would see nobody, and wept incessantly, finding a sort of childish comfort in tears. I tried to find a pistol in order to

have it in my power to shoot myself if I chose. I thought Iliinka Grap would spit in my face when next he saw me, and would be justified in doing so ; that Operoff enjoyed my discomfiture, and was telling everybody about it ; that Kolpikoff had been quite right when he had insulted me at Yar's ; that my foolish speeches at the Princess Kornakoff's could not have led to any other end ; and so on. Then I tried to throw the blame on others ; thought that it had been done on purpose to spite me ; imagined a whole intrigue against myself ; murmured against the professor, against my comrades, against Volodja and Dimitri, against papa for having sent me to the university, against Providence for having let me live to be thus dishonoured.

At last, feeling that I was quite lost in the opinion of all who knew me, I entreated papa to let me enter the army going to the Caucasus, or to enlist as 'hussar.' Papa was greatly displeas'd with me, but when he saw my own despair he endeavoured to console me by telling me that though it was a bad job, it might be remedied by my entering some other faculty.

Volodja, who did not seem to consider the matter as so very dreadful, said that, if I passed over to some other branch of study I should at least not have to feel ashamed in the presence of my new comrades.

The ladies either did not choose to understand, or could not understand, what an examination was, or what 'to break down' meant, and only pitied me because they saw how distressed I was.

Dimitri came to see me every day, and was most kind and affectionate ; yet that was just what made

me think that he cared for me less than he had done before. It pained and offended me to find him coming up to my room every day, and sitting by my side in perfect silence, his face wearing an expression somewhat like that with which a physician might have sat by the bedside of some patient who was dangerously ill. Sophia Ivanovna and Varinka sent me some books which I had once said I should like to read, and asked me to come and see them ; but I saw in their kindness only insulting pity for a man who had fallen so very low.

I grew calmer in a few days, but did not once leave the house till our departure to the country, and, giving myself to my grief, would wander listlessly from room to room, avoiding, even, all the members of the household. After long deliberation, one evening, as I was sitting alone downstairs listening to Avdotja Vassilievna's waltz, I suddenly started up, ran upstairs, got out the book on the title-page of which I had inscribed the words 'Rules for Conduct,' opened it, and a momentary feeling of repentance came over me. I burst into tears, but they were not tears of despair any more. When I grew calm again I resolved to write down several rules of conduct for my own guidance once more, and felt sure that I should never do anything wrong again, should never waste a single hour, and should never swerve from the rules I had laid down for myself.

Whether that moral fit lasted long, what it really was, and what new impetus it gave to my moral development, will be seen in my account of the second and happier part of my youth.

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